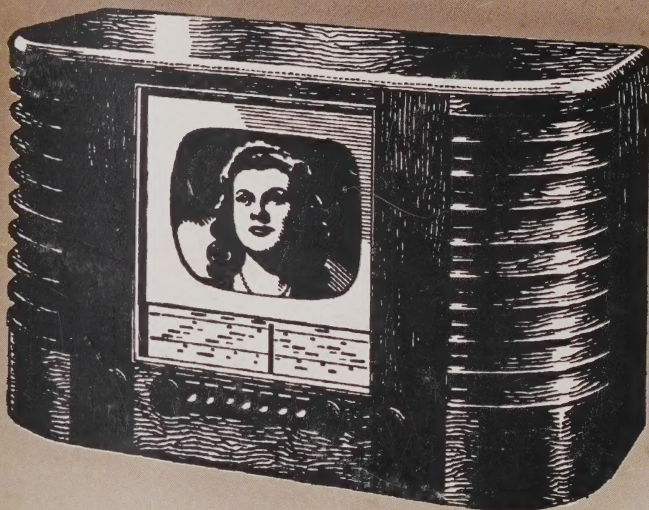


# 405 ALIVE

*Recalling the Golden Years of Black & White Television*



**Technostalgia for the joy of it!**

*Issue 39 - Third Quarter 1998*

ISSN 0969-8884

No cover price, because it's priceless (oh all right, £4 then)

**IN THE MAGAZINE WITH ABSOLUTELY  
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# 405 ALIVE

Founded 1989 by Andrew Emmerson, with title and inspiration by Bill Journeaux.

## Issue 39, Third Quarter 1998

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## LEGAL WARNING, particularly for New Readers

By reading this magazine you are entering a Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ), where normal values, logic and timescales do not apply. At the least you may feel unable to put the magazine down until you have read it through to the very end. While you read it, you may also feel strangely mellow and entirely unable to face doing anything else useful for 24 hours. Alternatively you may sense a sudden urge to have money extracted painlessly by one of our advertisers. Anything may happen and at the very worst you may enter a Permanent Autonomous Zone (PAZ) of your own creation.





FROM THE EDITOR ...

Not a lot to say this time so let's get on with the magazine. Don't forget the National Vintage Communications Fair—no doubt some of us will meet up there. And now a delightful quote heard from Trevor Bayliss, the 'wind-up radio' man...

"I don't mind people looking down on me, just so long as they don't expect me to look up to them."

Andrew Emmerson

## THOUGHTS ON TELEVISION

"Of course digital television is better quality... it's *digital*, isn't it?!"

Steve Roberts, BBC

Television is a new medium. It's called a medium because nothing is well-done.

Fred Allen on the American radio programme,  
*The Big Show*, December 17<sup>th</sup> 1950.

Whilst 89 per cent of Chinese households now have a television set, only 2 per cent have hot running water, according to a new national poll conducted by Gallup (November 1997).

The Irish breed rebels where the English breed gentlemen. The English like to watch the action; the Irish provide it.

Ronan O'Rahilly, founder of Radio Caroline and Caroline TV.

### Nation Shall Peak Six Unto Nation

*Awful BBC in-joke; the BBC's scheme for measuring sound levels uses Peak Programme Meters, calibrated from 1 to 7.*

# LETTERS, WE GET THE LIVELIEST LETTERS...

**Many thanks to all our letter writers, including those few who didn't make it to this page. We try and fit in as many letters as possible, occasionally editing for space or clarity.**

**From George Windsor, by e-mail:**

As you know, I bought two ITC VHS double cassettes at a local car boot, they are Robin Hood and William Tell. I remember well seeing these the first time around on ITV and it is very nostalgic seeing them again. I am unsure of the dates of transmission. I believe I am right in saying Robin Hood was on from 1955 to 1960 and William Tell from 1957 to ? I must get them converted to 405 so that I can play them on my 1954 Philips Console when I fix it! As they were filmed originally I guess that all could have survived.

- ❖ From memory, *Robin Hood* started in 1955 and *William Tell* a couple of years later. It's not really meaningful to quote a final date since some regions carried on showing them for quite a while on re-runs. *Robin Hood* was quite big in the United States too, where the programme was sponsored by Wild Root hair cream and a slightly different opening sequence was used (created over here by all appearances). I think the tapes are hard to find in the shops now so you did well. Finally, I'm not aware of any lost episodes.

I read in 'Goodbye to 405' (in *Television*, Jan. 1985) that we didn't get colour on 405 because the BBC advised the Television Advisory Committee that sporadic E interference would make colour on Band I unworkable. My guess is that NTSC hue drift would have been the worst effect but of course if PAL had been used for the trials in the 1950s, who knows what might have been! Do we know if that was the sole reason that we didn't get colour earlier than 1967?

- ❖ Any answers?

**From George Windsor, again:**

What ever happened to the TV show? After watching an early 1980's episode of the Linda Carter Show the other week it suddenly struck me we don't see



shows anymore, where did they go to? For example, we have had in the not too distant past the likes of:

The Black & White Minstrel Show

The Andy Williams Show

The Linda Carter Show

Billy Cotton Band Show

Kenneth McKeller

Cilla

Tom Jones

and numerous others and including 'Specials'.

What ever happened to variety? What have we now, what has taken their place? Film re-runs that's what! We need to badger the BBC and ITV, let's have some proper entertainment again, or is it too old fashioned? If it's too expensive lets see some repeats of these old shows, most of us would like to see them again anyhow.

#### **From Steve Ostler, by e-mail:**

Thanks for another great issue of *405 Alive*. You seem to have achieved a very happy balance between the various related interests – all backed by your benevolent tutelage. The magazine exudes a really friendly and informative atmosphere, and you're right to take so seriously minor points of history. If you don't, there is nobody else who will.

❖ And I never even knew I had a tutelage!

#### **From Tony Duell, by e-mail:**

I've got an N1500 running at last (actually I did it about 4 months ago). Getting the belts proved rather easy in the end - the counter belt is a 'walkman' belt from Maplin, the capstan belt can be home made from the RS O-ring kit, and the drum belt is available from CPC – they don't know it fits the N1500, but it's one of their audio belts - AVBELT12 I think.

Fortunately my heads were still good, and there was only a minor electronic fault (a shorted transistor in the muting circuit) to replace. I've also got a fix for the stock fault of a cracked loading pulley; it involves taking the loading mechanism apart, drilling/tapping a hole through the shaft extension (a lathe, or at least a good drill press, helps here), drilling a matching hole through the pulley, and assembling it with small machine screws. A lot of work, but that pulley won't fall off again. Incidentally if anyone else is restoring an N1500, Mauritron sell the service manual (photocopied).

#### **From Mike Izycky, by e-mail:**

At last! Thanks to the data CDs produced by Wilfried Meier, I can get a circuit at last for my valve voltmeter.... by the way, Paint Shop Pro *can* scale images to fit an A4 page: simply click on File-Page Setup and check the boxes.

#### **From Andy Henderson, by e-mail:**

Just a quick one. You asked in the magazine if anyone had a copy of the BBC 1966 World Cup Tape. I've got it and it's longer than the version shown a few years ago (at the start and the end) – but sadly no original graphics at start or end.

**From Colin Guy, Stickford (Lincs.), by e-mail:**

Just a quick note now I'm connected to this new fangled Internet thing, to say thanks for the latest issue of *405 Alive*. I just don't know how you do it, there's so much to read, and, like some of your other correspondents, I just can't put it down till I've read it from cover to cover. That's what has just got me into trouble now. You see, I've just got a nice new comfy leather chair, and whenever a mag arrives, I just sink into it and reminisce. Trouble was, *405 Alive* kept me here till about 2am, and my other half was not best pleased at being left on her own to fall asleep, instead of getting the attention she expected. Please keep up the good work, I don't mind what format the mag is in, just as long as you keep up the standards.

I was sorry to learn that Dave is giving up producing the excellent Dinosaur designs. I have a standards converter, and a test card generator; they are absolutely excellent products.

Just one final question though, I seem to remember reading in a back issue a while ago, that you intended to publish a separate mag concentrating more on the technical side of things. Did anything ever come of this?

❖ No, fortunately not! Producing even more words is not what I want to be doing...

**From The Joseph Cox Charity, 60 Agnes Court, Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14 6AJ (0161-225 8504):**

We are trying to locate a 12-inch tube with a black mask for a Murphy black and white television made in the early 1950s. If you could be of any assistance we would be delighted to hear from you.

❖ Can you help? If so, please contact the charity direct.

**From Dicky Howett, Chelmsford:**

Jim Pople has great confidence that I can identify film cameras from murky tv screen pictures! (See *405 Alive*, page 18, issue 38). The Auricon camera with the 'short fat magazine' is the original Cine-Voice optical recording system model. The Cine-Voice was self blimped, hence the tubby nature of the casing. The film capacity was only 100ft giving 2- 3/4 minutes of recording. Also pictured is an Auricon Super 1200, which has an optical automatic parallax finder giving an upright correct orientation image (not as Jim supposed, an electronic viewfinder). Of the other 35mm camera? Not sure, ask Bernard King!

## **BEFORE YOU LIFT THE 'PHONE...**

Please don't telephone to enquire about the state of your subscription or to seek technical advice, as this information is held in our separate Admin Office, to which all queries should be addressed by letter. Your cooperation in this will assist us to bring you your favourite magazines as quickly as possible.



## AURICON "SUPER 1200"

Auricon "Super 1200" Camera for recording 33 minutes of continuous 16mm Sound-On-Film talking pictures, with Automatic Parallax Finder, Model EIF-20, for professional use.

**Auricon**  
Hollywood



16mm Sound-On-Film



### AURICON "CINE-VOICE II" MODEL CM-72A 16mm Sound-On-Film Camera

...with Heavy-Duty  
3-lens Turret  
and other  
Professional  
Features

**GUARANTEE**  
We stand behind our product  
for 1 year, or 10,000 feet of film.  
We mean to stand by it.

**WITH THE NEW "CINE-VOICE II"**  
You Can Produce Professional 16mm Talking Pictures!



**SOUND TRACKS WITH PICTURE**—On the same film at the same time, using the "Cine-Voice" sound system is as easy as using a radio. When the "Cine-Voice" film is returned after processing, it will play its story (with sound) properly and easily in professional.



**ALWAYS READY TO RECORD**—"Cine-Voice," the Camera that hears what it sees, can take a full 16mm film any other sound in either direct (live) or indirect (radio) sound. It takes only a moment to place the microphone near the subject. To make talking pictures complete with automatic sound effects.



**NO SOUND, OPTICAL SOUND**—Save film cost on silent pictures. Glasses, lenses, and Bulb are all supplied for the "Cine-Voice" Camera. Use Microphone or Micro and Microphone System. Sound Recording, Recording "C" Photo-ducers have it all and at the same price as silent film. With the "Cine-Voice" you get the best of both worlds.



**GET THE SOUND WITH THE PICTURE...USE "CINE-VOICE II!"**

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405 ALIVE

Issue 39

### **From Bernard King, Hampton, by post chaise:**

I'm sorry I cannot join the modern fashion of e-mail and Internet but here goes...

On the subject of the identification of the movie cameras, especially the Auricon. All I remember about the Auricon was its frequent appearance in advertising in the technical press in those days when it was currently in use. What does intrigue me is the 35mm camera showing the characteristic cast front plate with substantial, tapered 'webs'. I would not think it was a Wall camera, as they are displayed alongside this mystery 'thing' in the excellently captured pictures off the screen and sent to me by Dicky Howett. To illustrate the point I have taken the liberty of using one of Dicky's pictures. In a group of five cameras, not reproduced here, there is a good view of the mystery camera, a square-sided Wall, another of the mystery jobs, an Akeley (sometimes known, I am told, as the 'thunderer' because of its noise) and, finally another Wall, this time with the rounded body similar to those at British Movietone News until the Christie's sale in March 1980.

What is of particular interest to me is the wide use of the Akeley tripods with the 9-inch diameter pan and tilt base. The various virtues of this head were demonstrated to me by British Movietone's cameraman, Norman Fisher, whilst the camera was still at Denham. I even got the chance to try out the thing with a Wall on top. Legend at Denham had it that 'another' newsreel company piled up its Akeley tripods and burned them in front of Movietone's windows when that 'other' company discontinued filming their 'reel'.

In the picture showing a closer view of two of the cameras (I don't think the detail in the five-camera group would have reproduced), the mystery camera can be seen alongside the square-sided Wall with the mech. housing 'racked-over' for focus and line-up.

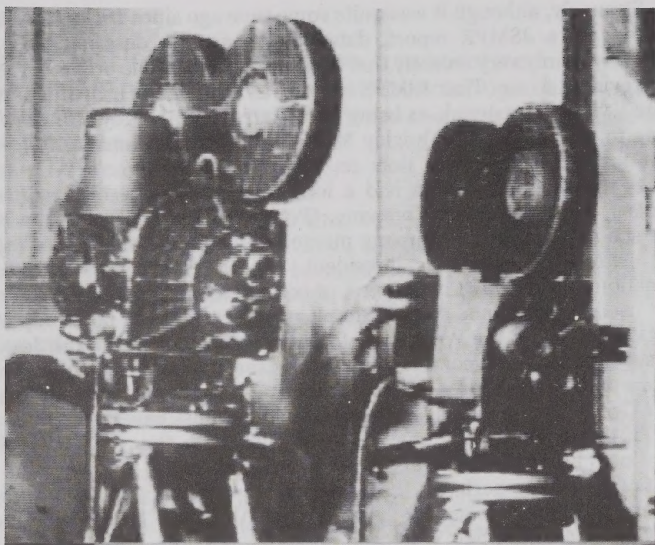
Further adding to the intrigue is the difference in the extent of the front plate 'webbing'. That shown on page 19, issue 38, has a plain surface front plate between the main webs yet the one in Dicky's latest picture shows a complex pattern of additional webbing. If anyone knows the identity of the camera I would be pleased to know.

This strengthening webbing characteristic turns up with the old 3-strip Technicolor camera. The film magazine was liberally endowed with tapering webs on the working side of the camera yet an early picture, published in 1936, shows the magazine with no webs at all. This reinforcement against metal warping must have had some importance in camera engineering.

- ❖ Yes, Bernard, it most certainly does. Many of these housings were made of the zinc-magnesium alloy known as mazak (also called zamak, magerine metal and another rather scatologically rude kind of metal). This stuff was renowned more for its lightness than its strength or dimensional stability, which is why many pre-war Dinky Toys and the wheels of Hornby trains have now crumbled into dust or distorted into hideous shapes. Many is the hapless radio collector who has found contorted chassis components made of mazak too.

See next page for the photo mentioned in Bernard's letter.





**On the left is the 'mystery' camera with the more complex web pattern on the front plate. On the right, the square-sided Wall with the camera 'racked over' for focussing and line-up. Both tripods are the popular Akeley pattern, which served newsreel companies for very many years.**

**From Bernard King, Hampton, via Postman ordinaire:**

Mention has been made in the pages of *405 Alive* of the Wall cameras. There can be no doubt that a considerable amount of footage shot on those newsreel cameras has featured on our earlier, 405 TV screens — and still does in the programmes featuring recent history.

When I first encountered the Wall, at British Movietone News in 1979, I really thought the first one I saw was the famous Bell & Howell 2709 but it was an earlier design which appeared to be the B & H and may have been made by Wall under licence. The name 'WALL' was cast into the base plate. The later Wall with the rack-over body was more like the Mitchell NC. In fact, there were three different types of Wall at BMN and I photographed all three.

On the side of the later versions was an oval plate that declared the maker's name and address: J.M. WALL, 107 N. Franklin St., Syracuse, NY, USA. This was completely new to me and I wished to know more about the company and its origins. The company did not appear in books or directories in my keeping so an approach was made to the US Embassy, circa 1980. They politely replied regretting that the company name did not appear in any of their directories.

Strangely, although it was quite some time ago since Dicky Howett sent me a copy of a JSMPE report, dated October 1935, describing the Wall camera, it was only very recently that the clue to the possible origin of the Wall became evident to me. That JSMPE report was written by H. Griffin and he is indicated, via a tiny asterisk, as being of the International Projector Corp., NY. Turning to my copy of the Quigley **Motion Picture Almanac**, 1944-45, (I have it for the change-over dots on page three) the Who's Who section indicates that Herbert Griffin had a long history in projector engineering, particularly with the Power Company. (Powers projectors — those with the square spool boxes). This company merged with the International Projector Corp., with Griffin as vice-president. There were also subsidiaries. (International Projector Corp., were, of course, the makers of the extremely widely used Simplex and Super Simplex projectors; they were reportedly almost exclusively in the West End of London's cinemas in the thirties). One of the subsidiaries was a company named as Cinesimplex Corp., Syracuse, NY. The same area as the address on the Wall camera. Quite incidentally, in 1942-43, Mr Griffin was president of the SMPE so he must have been quite a big noise in the equipment game. He was also still the president of the International Projector Corp., in the 1944-45 Almanac.

Could it be, perhaps that J.M. Wall was another subsidiary of 'International'? But it was not listed in the Almanac! However, it makes interesting speculation that Wall cameras could, possibly, have been made by a company in the same group, and same leadership, as that which produced the world-famous Simplex. Any further information would be welcome.

- ❖ So far all we can find is that Wall was still listed as an independent manufacturer of 35mm cameras in 1959.

#### **From a recent subscriber:**

I have a strong desire to finish with television and just play videos. Does the TV detector van pick up watching videotapes?

- ❖ The answer must be yes, although if you have no television aerial and also have the television *and* VCR modified so that cannot possibly receive broadcasts, then you do not require a television licence. Here is what the official government information says on the subject (from <http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/who.htm> on the Internet):

#### **What if I only watch videos?**

If a television or video recorder (VCR) can receive signals, then you need a licence. However, you don't need a licence if the equipment is not connected to an aerial, satellite receiver or cable and you only use it to watch pre-recorded tapes. This sometimes happens in schools and colleges.

- ❖ As for whether the vans can detect when you're watching tapes, I posed this question on the Internet and had the following response:



With a TV used to watch a video tape, if no aerial is connected the TV is still allowed to radiate sufficient Local Oscillator signal to create a field strength of 56dBuV/m at a range of three metres. This is easily enough to be picked up by a detector van

**From J. McClusky, Bolton:**

Please find enclosed cheque for £16, which is my subscription for your fantastic *405 Alive*. I got a sample copy a couple of months ago and it has been a life saver for my old TV and me. I bought an old Pye television; I didn't know the model and I couldn't get it to work. It was driving me up the wall but when I got *405 Alive* I found the address of someone to fix my set, which he did and he also told me my set was an LV20 from approximately 1949. Also through the magazine I bought a modulator from Dave Grant at Dinosaur, then sent some tapes to Dave Looser to have them converted. Now I have the pleasure of watching classic 1950s shows on my old Pye television. I could never have done this without *405 Alive* — thank you for a fantastic magazine.

- ❖ Many thanks for your kind words, glad to hear that someone likes it! Feedback such as is always welcome and no, we didn't make up this letter ourselves!

**From Les Roworth, Harrow:**

I received my copy of *405 Alive* issue 38 the other day and I would like to make some comments:

(1) Dicky Howett's article on early British colour television on page 62 appears to have a date that is not quite right. In 1955 I was a member of the Marconi Demonstration unit based at the Kensington Film Studio and I was sent to Alexandra Palace to help with the setting up of the first Marconi Image Orthicon Colour cameras. The year was 1955 and it was before September because this was when I joined Associated Rediffusion. I also know it was a Friday because I was asked what sort of fish I would like for lunch in the canteen! The months could have been April, May or June 1955.

We had two cameras one of which was mounted on a Vinten Pathfinder crane. The BBC Design Dept provided a Jumbo colour monitor, an interesting device with three cathode ray tubes mounted onto a filter box all in a 6ft rack. If you looked straight into the filter box you could see a super colour picture but if you were not dead centre it was very strange. There was also a telecine/slide machine to provide another picture source. All this equipment was valve-driven and would drift gently in and out of registration. The other hazard was the transmitter under the studio and we warned to leave the cameras on the copper floor not at the edge of the studio.

The film of the tests could have been shot in 1955 and as to the Studio we were in it was most likely 'A' because there were still cameras in Studio B. Perhaps somebody can improve on the month when we did the setting up in 1955.

(2) The article about early television recording by Andrew Henderson was also interesting because in 1955 Associated Rediffusion had purchased the 35mm telerecording machines which had recorded the Coronation, or so the story went! There were two machines fitted with Cameflex cameras and in a

separate room the 35mm Westrex sep mag machines. The quality varied depending on the incoming picture quality, but we found that for drama if we fitted the cameras with older Image Orthicon tubes we could get a better grey scale. The tubes were 4½" and fitted into Marconi Mark III cameras. By juggling with the target settings and the use of the old tubes we could get very good pictures. The major problem was that the tubes tended to 'stick' and the remains of the highlights of a picture would remain. But if the camera was put out of mechanical focus and then wiped across a 5kW lamp the 'stick' disappeared. This required the Lighting Director to put in extra lamps if there was not a suitable lamp in the area. The cameraman also had to be quick because the programme although being recorded was also going out live.

The last major drama programme that was telerecorded was *As I Die*, directed by Bob Tronson in September 1958. We had VTR as the back-up recording. The programme was recorded on the Saturday and Sunday, edited and transmitted from the two EMI flying spot Telecine machines at Wembley on the Tuesday. I was the Senior vision controller, we had fitted an extra camera so the Director had five cameras, a black box which could take two cameras in a permanent mix so we could super three cameras when required. The vision mixer in the studio was a Marconi A B Cut mixer, which could only super two cameras normally.

I still have a reel of 35mm film of the programme; unfortunately there is no Mag sound. I found the reel amongst the test films in telecine when I returned to the Wembley site in 1969 when it had become London Weekend. I think the quality is very good but of course I am biased.

The Ampex 1000 VTR machines changed everything and when I moved to Tyne Tees Television we had three machines that had been supplied by Cintel, who were Ampex agents at the time. We had two in the studio and one mounted in a Bedford Truck. When we edited programmes, the edit points were often found by cueing up on a particular sound. This was because you could rock the tape over the sound head put a Chinagraph mark on the tape and convince the Director it was the right place. Then you cut the tape and with the magic goo find the frame pulses to join the tape. We used a Smith block and later on there was a more complex device with a spinning head and a small scope to see the pulse for real.

Later we bought a RCA TR22 VTR machine which was fitted into an OB unit towing its own diesel generator so it could record on the move. There were three Marconi Mark III cameras and all the usual OB facilities plus a Make Up area with mirror and lights. This area was used for the storage of the cameras on special mountings so they could be left on when on the move. This allowed us to start shooting as soon as we arrived without the normal one-hour warm up. The vehicle was also used on the move, which made editing quite exciting. The vehicle was built on a Bedford coach chassis to provide a soft ride. The vehicle went on the air in 1962 and must have been one of the first large OB vans capable of working/recording on the move.

Please use this and edit as required if you think people would be interested. I could put something together about the early days of Associated Rediffusion from 1955-58 from the Vision Control or "Racks" point of view. Also the early operational days of Tyne Tees from 1958-1969 or even the last of the 405 line days of London Weekend from 1969 to the end.



*Dicky Howett comments:* Les was there so I can't argue with his luncheon menu. However, in my defence I did gain my information from several sources including Mike Leeston-Smith director of those AP colour shows and also various BBC Monographs of which no. 32, a survey of colour states, "During the Winter of 1955-56 a regular series of transmissions was radiated ...again only slides and pictures from 16mm film was used. In the meantime Studio A at Alexandra Palace had been equipped with a single colour camera of Marconi design and the first occasion on which colour pictures including scenes from the studio were broadcast occurred on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> April 1956...By the Autumn of 1956, studio A had been equipped with a second experimental camera..."

So there we have it, in black and white, from the pens of Mr I.R. Atkins (BBC TV) Mr A.R. Stanley (BBC Engineering Division) and Mr S.N. Watson (BBC Designs Dept). Of course, there are a lot of 'in the meantime's' and 'By the Autumns' which leaves plenty of scope for wayward dates!

#### **From Alan Hitchen, Runcorn:**

In response to Gary Smith's letter in issue 37, page 13. The reason I thought Laurie Johnson's version of *Sucu Sucu* was the one used as the theme for *Top Secret* was that the **ITV Encyclopedia of Adventure** said it was. However the entry for the Polka Dots in **The Ballad Years** confirms that it was their version (Philips PB.1 188) that was used. From the late fifties the Polka Dots also used their vocal talents for advertising jingles. Helping to sell, amongst other things, Bri-Nylon, Dairy Box, Quality Street, Players Navy Cut and Kit Kat with Alma Cogan.

Thanks to Alan Keeling for the information about Mickey Dunne in issue 36, page 5. He recalled some of the lyrics, which I include below in order to further jog his memory.

Mickey Dunne he's a friend to anyone  
In a tricky spot but as like as not  
When the troubles through who'll be holding the baby

Mickey Dunne knows a horse that should have won  
Didn't even start broke the jockey's heart  
But who's the scout who is cleaned right out

Some are bewildered by the game  
Needs a shoulder to cry on downright shame  
She needs a bed just to sleep on  
And who's the lad who's playing Galahad

Mickey Dunne stop and think of number one  
You'll never make your pile with a friendly smile

And an open hand tell me what does it land you

Some are bewildered by the game  
Needs a shoulder to cry on downright shame  
She needs a bed just to sleep on  
And who's the lad who's playing Galahad  
He must be raving mad

Mickey Dunne stop and think of number one  
You'll never make your pile with a friendly smile  
And an open hand, tell me what does it land you?

© 1967 Max Harris/Myles Rudge, Essex Music.

**From David Grant, by e-mail:**

Regarding the Belling-Lee connector, the picture by the article is of the earlier style connector (as fitted to Murphy A56V and 58V) – not a convincing demonstration of the age of the current style. So I'm still sceptical about the premise of 60th anniversary... I still think they came out in 1946. Convince me otherwise.

**From George Windsor, by e-mail:**

Just a few lines to say that I have managed to repair my 1954 Philips console last night to the point of obtaining a raster again after 13 years and will be working further on it as time allows. I must say I had forgotten how loud the line whistle was! Oh the smell and noise again after all those years! I have taken photos and will send by e-Mail once scanned.

**From John Wakely, Colliers Wood:**

I read with interest the article by Bruce Adams in issue 38. The 2-volt Mazda triode tubes of the 1940s and early 50s did indeed suffer from heater-cathode leaks and shorts. A 405 Alive member restoring in particular a Murphy or Ekco receiver of this vintage will be lucky to find a tube of this type in good condition. Type numbers for this series were CRM91 (9-inch), CRM121 (12-inch) and the huge CRM151 (15-inch). The problem continued for a long period and I could never understand why the engineers at the Mazda research department at Brimsdown never solved the problem. In my own opinion the problem lay in the low voltage, high current heaters used in these tubes. I think the heavy flow of current at 50c/s caused the heater to vibrate within the cathode assembly, wearing away the delicate coating insulating it from the snug-fitting outer cathode. After a period a leak or short would remove the HF portion of the video waveform, causing smearing of the picture or in bad cases complete loss. Hence the use of the low-capacity isolation transformer mentioned by Bruce.

With the high cost of replacement tubes this became a huge problem for set owners and rental companies alike. I remember talking many years ago to a television engineer who worked for a major television maintenance company in the late 1940s. He told me they had to set up their own rebuilding plant due to the huge number of premature failures. They did not 'regun' the



tubes as such; the old gun was removed with great care and the heater/cathode assembly was dismantled, recoated and reassembled evacuated in the normal way. It was a very good job by all accounts.

Later Mazda tubes suffered from early loss of emission and the most annoying fault of all, a disconnected cathode connection—this would leave a very dim unmodulated raster upon which the brilliance and contrast controls had little if any effect. Many of the early 19-inch tubes suffered this fate and I can remember seeing the disbelieving look on the customer's face when you informed him that the tube had failed on his two year-old receiver. The CRM1901/1903 and the 23-inch versions all went the same way or lost emission.

A friend of mine set up one of the first tube regunners in the mid 1950s; he always said that the best combination was a Mullard gun inside a Mazda bulb. The Mazda tubes had the best screen phosphors and produced superb quality pictures with a slight blue tint. Again the problem went on for a long time considering all that was required was an improved spot-weld on the cathode assembly. A sharp tap on the neck would prove the point, restoring the picture for a very short period. Mullard did not escape without a problem regarding the heater/cathode assembly used in the MW43-64/69 series tubes. A partial short in the series-connected 6.3V, 0.3A heater resulted in a voltage drop of only three volts. The tube showed all the signs of low emission until the set was tilted back and the neck gently tapped; this released the offending material, in fact it could be seen to drop as a red-hot tiny ball from within the heater assembly. The heater then brightened up but alas for only a short while until another bit of muck again shorted part of the heater out once more.

Valve and CRT heaters don't like 'dirty DC' to power them. The first Ferguson Courier dual-standard portable used a folded version of the popular 950 series chassis. Four valve heaters were wired in the HT supply line and only warmed up when the line stage began to draw current. This resulted in a very slow warm up that got longer as the set began to age. The only cure was to replace the four valves concerned. I can only think that the 'dirty DC' effect somehow affected the resistance wire used for the valve heater assemblies. The later model used a conventional mains dropper and the earlier ones were modified. Standard AVO meters were unable to read the AC/DC. mix and gave a reading around 4.2 volts for a 6.3-volt heater.

I made mention of Murphy sets earlier and managed to find a model. V200A, circa 1952. For those of you not familiar with the V200A I will explain its strange construction. It was known as the 'aeroplane chassis' and this consisted of two steel plates with the circular picture tube (CRM121B) mounted through the middle. The RF unit, line timebase complete with oil-filled transformer, sound and field timebases were built on separate chassis, mounted back to front. The whole assembly removed from the cabinet resembled a V2 rocket bomb from earlier dubious fame (?). It looks a good project and I have managed to get a bright raster on the screen with very little work. I will attempt part two soon.

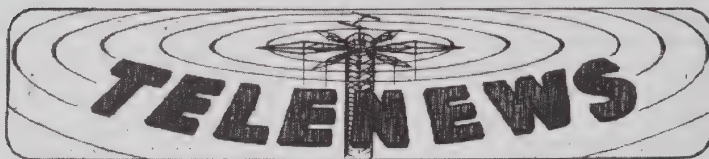
During the summer I salvaged from a house that was being demolished a rare Philips projection receiver and combined radio. It is model 700, serial number 1116, produced around 1948 and is of massive construction. Octal valves are used in all stages other than the IF unit, where we find the EF50. It is very clean and powers up, producing a defocussed spot on switch-off due to the lack of line drive. Can any member help with any service data for this

model (all expenses paid)? It uses two large chassis and will be difficult to trace components without some help. [Contact John on 0181-542 3861, fax 0181-540 7632 or write to 108 High Street, Colliers Wood, London SW19 2BT]

Last but not least.... can readers guess why a heavy goods vehicle licence is a great advantage to a vintage television enthusiast? Answer: you get to drive dustcarts!

I was going to have John quietly certified but then he threw in this interesting final remark:

I was thinking that the *405 Alive* magazine would go down in history as the only reference book written by the original 'hands-on' people. It's great to see such a good following from interested members.



### MISSING BELIEVED WIPED 98

Good news! There will be an MBW presentation this year after all and what's more, the line-up looks like beating all previous sessions. Date: Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October, times: 14.30-20.00 with an intermission; location: National Film Theatre, South Bank, London, SE1 8TL (0171-815 1374). Advance booking is essential; these showings are always sell-outs.

There's a strong Rediffusion theme this year... provisional contents include an Ideal Home special of the A-R advertising magazine *Jim's Inn* from 1961, a BBC evening news broadcast from 1958, the A-R pop show *Cool For Cats; Steptoe & Son* 'Men of Property'; a Rediffusion play of 1967 directed by the now-famous Ridley Scott, and the Rediffusion thriller *Object Z* 'Meteor'. The second session is devoted to crime... the sole surviving *Murder Bag* from 1958, the *Z Cars* episode 'Contraband', a lost *Fabian of the Yard* ('Robbery at the Museum') and a *Saber of London*.

### NEW CD

Spotted in a Northampton record shop: a pretty awful CD for £4 (it's a budget label job and £4 is what it's worth). It's called *TV TIMES* and contains "40 favourites from the small screen" (in other words cover versions of programme themes, played on a Bontempi organ or some cheap synthesiser!). The redeeming glory is the cover photo – a sharp



photo of an ivory Retrovisor television. This was Radiocraft's re-creation of the Bush TV22, a product that is now probably rarer than the sets it was modelled on. The CD is a 1998 production from Castle Communications, number MAC CD 366.

### **TSW IN PERIL**

Plymouth's unique film archive could be lost to the city forever unless it can find a new home, it is reported. In January, the TSW Film and Television Archive must move out of its basement home in the Foot & Bowden building at Derry's Cross, when its lease runs out. The archive, a charity that looks after footage from the defunct TSW and Westward TV stations, plus material dating from 1898, faces splitting the collection if a solution is not found.

### **BRUSSELS EXHIBITION**

The bank Gemeentekrediet is mounting a unique exhibition in its Gallery in 'Passage 44', Blvd Botanique 44 in Brussels (near the Nieuwstraat on the Rogierplein side, a short distance from the North Station) from 15 September to 15 December 1998. It is open from Tuesday through to Sunday from 11am to 6pm (closed Mondays and holidays). The exhibition, covering an area of 600 square metres, features an enormous amount of historical communication apparatus, mostly concerned with telegraphs of the 19th century, some items shown for the first time. Special attention is also given to wireless telegraphy, with emphasis on Marconi apparatus (e.g. coherer, magnetic detector, 10-inch induction coil, multiple tuner, etc.).

Some 200 of the 600 items on display are from the collection of well-known collector Fons Vanden Berghen. In addition, a number of exceptional items are on loan from the CNAM (Collection National des Arts et Métiers de France), the PTT Museums of the Netherlands, Belgium and France, various university museums (Aachen, Ghent, Antwerp, Liege, Delft and Leuven) and from fellow collectors. An annotated catalogue will be available.

Those with access to the Internet can admire many of the exhibits by visiting [http:// www.cris.com/~gsraven/fonsimages/fons\\_museum.html](http://www.cris.com/~gsraven/fonsimages/fons_museum.html)

### **NEW HOME VIDEO RELEASES**

The following tapes have been released on VHS by Network/Sound & Media Ltd, part of the Virgin group of companies. They should be available in (or through) most video shops.

**Charley Says**, 7951095 (animated public information films).

**Charley Live**, 7951109 (live action public information films).

**The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe vols. 1-4**, 7951091-7951094 (twelve episodes on four tapes of this children's series shown on the BBC in 1965).

**Catweazle vols. 1 & 2**, 7951104 and 7951105 (six episodes of this LWT children's programme first shown in 1970).

**Space Patrol vols. 1-3**, 7951100-7951102 ("the rediscovered sixties classic unseen for more than thirty years"). Each tape contains four episodes of this space series in the Gerry Anderson mould, shown originally on ITV. Remarkably Joe Michael Straczynski, creator/producer of the programme *Babylon 5*, is quoted on the sleeve notes as saying "my favourite show as a kid, bar none" although cynics will assume that he was almost certainly referring to the American show of the same name and not Roberta Leigh's British production.



**SPACE PATROL** starring Ed Kemmer as **Commander Buzz Corey** and Lyn Osborn as **Cadet Happy**; not to be confused with **SPACE PATROL** starring a bunch of marionettes!





## **NEW VINTAGE VIDEO TAPE**

A bookshop in London (Politicos, telephone 0171-828 0010) is compiling a video tape of party political broadcasts on television, going right back to the very first examples in the early 1950s. More details when we have them; it was due for issue as we went to press.

## **TELEVISION BANNED IN AFGHANISTAN**

As reported by Waveguide during July:

The Taliban government in Afghanistan has banned television, and residents have been given 15 days to get rid of all television sets, satellite receivers and video recorders. Those found with receivers after the period of grace has expired will have them destroyed and they will be punished by law. Afghanistan's television service was closed down in 1996 by the Taliban government for fear it would corrupt society, but many residents have been receiving direct broadcasts by satellite.

## **ALF GARNETT CREATOR JOHNNY SPEIGHT DIES**

The writer, Johnny Speight – creator of the television character, Alf Garnett – has died, after a short illness, at 78. He revolutionised TV comedy with his creation of the bigoted Londoner, who made his first appearance in *Till Death Us Do Part* in 1965.

Mr Speight died at his Hertfordshire home. He had been suffering from cancer. His other credits included writing for the *Morecombe and Wise Show*, *Peter Sellers* and *Marty Feldman*.

BBC Ceefax, 5<sup>th</sup> July 1998.

## **LAMB CHOP PUPPETEER SHARI LEWIS DIES**

Shari Lewis, who enchanted children with a spirited, squeaky-voiced sock puppet named Lamb Chop, has died of cancer at 65. The Emmy winning entertainer, diagnosed with uterine cancer in June, developed pneumonia while receiving chemotherapy. Miss Lewis left TV in the 1960s but returned with the children's series *Lamb Chop's Play-Along*. She stopped production in Canada six weeks ago so she could begin treatment.

BBC Ceefax, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1998.

By the way, Jeremy Rogers points out: "She didn't leave TV in the 1960s; *The Shari Lewis Show* was made by the BBC between 1969 and 1976."

## **PETER FAIRLEY**

Peter Fairley died in August at the age of 67. Peter was a science correspondent with ITN and contributed to their coverage of NASA's Apollo moon missions.

## TAKE A BOW!

Congratulations to 405 Aliver and APTS archivist Simon Vaughan, who secured a First in his university results. In addition to this, his dissertation received an 'A+'.

## FEEDBACK: SURVIVING PRE-WAR BRITISH TELEVISION SETS

The TV that Baird brought to Australia in 1939 for demonstrations (which were cut short by the war) is in the Victorian Science Museum. It looks a lot like a post-war Murphy V49. The switch is a channel selector, obviously it's the system switch to select either Baird 240 lines or EMI 405 lines. Apparently the set turned up at RMIT University in 1979, its whereabouts having been unknown since Baird hurried back to England.

Wenlock Burton, Melbourne, Australia.

A few more pre-war sets to add to the list of known survivors:

Two Murphy A58V 9" television/radio

One Murphy 9" console, glass front under controls

One 12" Baird/Bush console of 1938

One 6" HMV table model television/radio

One monster HMN mirror-viewed + radio + gram

Two HMV consoles television + radio (different models)

One RGD television + gram + radio, works only, cabinet was full of woodworm.

Sorry about some of the model numbers missing; most of these sets are not easy to get at.

This was sent in by a reader in Kent;  
to protect his privacy we have not printed his name.

## AMAZING REVELATION IN THE *RADIO TIMES*

From an interview with Murray Walker in the *Radio Times*, 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> July:

*What is your first memory of television or radio?*

Sylvia Peters reading the news on radio, back in the thirties.

...Amazing – before she was born probably. Does nobody at the *Radio Times* actually check the drivel they print?



*Lovely Sylvia Peters pictured off-screen with her husband, TV producer Kenneth Milne-Buckley.*



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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**ENTERTAINERS IN BRITISH FILMS: A CENTURY OF SHOWBIZ IN THE CINEMA**, by Denis Gifford. Published by Flicks Books, 1988 at £40.00. ISBN 0948911 76X. 340 pages.

Variety, they tell us, is dead—and if modern television didn't murder it, it certainly managed to assist at its suicide; but, lest we forget, during a large part of this century singers and dancers and comedians, jugglers, contortionists bird impressionists and all manner of extraordinary performers did dominate the entertainment scene on Britain's stages, radios and screens. Though perhaps gone and (possibly) forgotten now, many hundreds of artistes, both stars and 'specialities' were, in fact filmed at some point during their careers, and happily preserved for posterity either in feature films or guest appearances in newsreels and variety shorts.

Tracking down information on these appearances, however, has always been a tricky business – standard reference books pay little attention to "full supporting programme", archives are patchy and even the august British Film Institute, have little on file ('is it art'??) so we must all doff our hats in gratitude to Denis Gifford for compiling "Entertainers in British Films" an invaluable work of reference, that succeeds in plugging one of the last great gaps in our historical knowledge.

Flipping through a random selection of pages in the middle of the book, one swiftly encounters entries for Dan Leno, The Luton Silver Prize Band, Humphrey Lyttelton, Mary Millington, The Mindbenders, Joseph Muscant's Dance Band and Anna Neagle, demonstrating quite well just how broad the scope of this work really is. Each of the nearly 4,000 artistes is given a full filmography plus listing of musical performances (Mary Millington excepted!), and there's even a handy alphabetical song index at the end of the book giving enthusiasts with dodgy memories, the opportunity to figure out a film title, working from the other direction!

This is a work that has to be on the shelf of every self-respecting film researcher and enthusiast of British cinema, music or popular culture. If there is a single flaw to be found in this book, it is the price tag, and the sheer volume of information, and significance to our lives justifies every penny!

Alex Gleason

**PLEASE STAND BY**, by Michael Ritchie. Published by the Overlook Press and to be found in Foyles bookshop and Tower Records in London. Paperback, 246 pages, illustrated, £11.99. ISBN 0-87951-615-1.

**Please Stand By** is a recently published book by American film director Michael Ritchie. It attempts to chronicle the early history of television up to 1948. It is only partially successful in doing this. Trying to appeal to the general public and the enthusiast (the book being designed for a wide-ranging

a difficult tightrope to negotiate and a difficult task. Ritchie puts a severe slant on the development of American television, with a few foreign competitors (mostly the BBC). The title is derived from the American card that was the equivalent of 'Normal Service Will Be Resumed Soon As Possible'.

At first glance the American details seem to be well researched, however on more familiar ground (for me at least) the British details border on the inaccurate. To paraphrase some examples of Ritchie's; EMI copied RCA patents to develop their electronic systems (both systems were developed independently). The first BBC drama is a film clip of Laurence Olivier in *As You Like It* (this was a commercial film release and nothing to do with the BBC). Baird is a rather hapless tinkerer who tries outlandish experiments such as one using human eyes (a well known 'shaggy dog story' from the imaginative Baird). Britain declares war on Nazi Germany on 1st September 1939 – 'Black Friday' (It was the following Sunday morning). Such randomly picked details throw the accuracy of the book in a rather bad light, especially in comparison with superlative works such as Bruce Norman's **Here's Looking At You**. That said, the American details are (with some reservations) on more solid ground. An annoying tendency to describe events with some added dramatic embroidery is regrettable.

Taking all the British inaccuracies into account, the book is still good value for money and an entertaining read. Some fascinating photographs litter the insert pages. But please don't expect a definitive history, just an enthusiastic meander through some highly coloured early TV events.

Andrew R. Henderson

**ELECTRONIC CLASSICS: COLLECTING, RESTORATION & REPAIR, written by Andrew Emmerson and published by Newnes at £19.99. ISBN 0-7506-3788-9, paperback, 413 pages, illustrated.**

Another entertaining and instructional volume from Andrew Emmerson, the man who brought you the **Sound & Vision Year Book**, **Old Telephones** and a recently published novelty item, **Old Television**.

**Electronic Classics** is the fulfilment of the above books, written as always, in Andrew's accessible and faintly ironic style. The book is presented in easily digestible chunks and covers a great deal of essential ground. Whole sections – illustrated with photographs, line drawings and period advertisements – are devoted to the restoration of television sets, radios, telephones, boatanchors, (you name it), with tips and advice gleaned from experts. Other sections deal with Dealers (and their secrets!), Fakes (and how to spot them), Buying and Selling plus an exhaustive (and exhausting) chapter on how to package an electronic treasure for safe postal delivery (and everything you ever wanted to know about bubble wrap!). Included also in the book are lists of Fairs, Markets, Auctions, Clubs, Museums, Magazines plus much else of particular interest to the aspiring or established collector. **Electronic Classics** is a comprehensive and essential addition to the book collection of the discerning enthusiast.

Dicky Howett

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## TWO PERIOD FILM REVIEWS

**Contributed by Denis Gifford and spotted in the February and September 1935 editions respectively of the Monthly Film Bulletin. These two films were shown on BBC television on a number of occasions in 1936.**

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**B.B.C. DROITWICH.** (Great Britain). 1935. 621.396.712  
35mm S-on-F. (flam.); 16 mins. 1,400ft. 2 reels.

*Certificate* : Censor's Certificate "U."

*Production*: Produced by John Grierson (G.P.O. Film Unit). Directed by R. H. Watt. Commentary spoken by A. S. Hibberd.

*Description*: Direct photography, with some spoken commentary early in the film, all the sound being post-synchronised.

*Purpose*: General Post Office propaganda.

*Distributors*: Zenifilms.

*Conditions of supply*: At present available for theatrical distribution only.

*Contents*: Finding possible sites for the new long-wave broadcasting station, erecting trial masts and making tests of each before the final decision. Station strength "contours" of the Droitwich site. Building the station. Water for cooling the valves; conductivity of the subsoil. Erection of the 700-foot masts. Arrival and assembly of plant; the Diesels; connections to control room. Testing the station— view of one of the huge valves starting the Diesels. The conclusion is a pictorial résumé of the finished station accompanied by rapidly succeeding excerpts of various types of broadcasts.

*Criticism*: It has all the merits of the G.P.O. Unit's productions, as well as the shortcomings— which, for educational purposes, are due to a desire to interest general audiences rather than students. This gives it a wider interest, but it also means that it covers a great deal of ground and raises points in a dramatic and interesting fashion to which a lecturer or teacher could devote several subsequent periods. There are two genuine thrills in the picture — the first is the erection of the masts, with views from the tops the second is when the restless camera makes its only prolonged pause in front of any object, with an alternator taken end-on standing square and stolid in the middle of the frame, dramatised only by the sound of the machine getting up to speed.

*Suitability*: A teaching film for University and Adult Classes. A general film for all over 14. Could be used for Applied Technology or General Science instruction.

*Grade*: I.

D. F. R.

**B.B.C.: THE VOICE OF BRITAIN.** (Great Britain). 1935, 621.396.  
35mm. S-on-F. (flam.) 5,035 ft. 56 mins.

*Certificate*: Censors' Certificate "A,"

*Production*: Produced by the G.P.O. Film Unit, under the direction of John



Grierson and Stuart Legg.

*Description:* Direct photography with spoken commentary and musical and other background effects.

*Distributors:* G-B. Equipments.

*Conditions of Supply:* On application to the distributors.

*Contents:* An impressionistic survey of broadcasting in this country, opening with the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard and the Morning Service and concluding with Big Ben striking the hour of midnight—but taking cross sections across a wide period of time instead of following the simple time-sequence of a single day. No explanation is attempted of the workings of the B.B.C.; we are merely presented with a continuous series of brief glimpses of broadcasters and staff-officials in action, dissolved smoothly into one another and varied with occasional shots of listeners. Included are The King and Queen, Mr. Lansbury, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Baldwin, Low, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells. G. K. Chesterton, Commander King-Hall, Clapham and Dwyer at rehearsal, Nina Mae McKinney, Henry Ball and his Band, Dr. Adrian Boult conducting Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, an S. O. S. reaching a trawler at sea, and an outside broadcast of the boat-race shown taking place. Of the officials, Sir John Reith is represented by his voice only; he himself is not seen. Noise-effects also are shown being made in the studio. During the broadcasting of the Children's Hour we are given views of children of different social grades listening-in and later on, during the playing of the late dance-music (by Henry Hall), we are taken through the streets and eventually shown what is intended to be a typical domestic scene at a suburban villa, with father, mother and young son inside and daughter saying good-bye to a boy companion at the gate.

*Criticism:* A pleasant film from an entertainment point of view, but with no vast profundity of implication and providing us with no special insight into broadcasting or the methods of the B.B.C.. The impressionistic sequence of events is at times rather disturbing, as it is difficult to know exactly what is happening or why. From the purely documentary aspect the film seems really rather thin, and the inserted suburban sequence at the end is slow and not particularly convincing it could be excised without loss. The interest is largely maintained throughout by the actual characters presented. A. V.

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## EXHIBITION REVIEW

**Watch With Mother exhibition at the Dudley Museum and Art Gallery. Runs until 28th November. Visited by David and Jill Probert.**

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Suitable for children of all ages – and readers of 405 Alive! – this small exhibition of children's TV puppets and models makes a nice journey into nostalgia, or is it childhood? Fairly small by some standards, covering two

rooms, but with a varied collection of puppets and animation models, plus some original art work, it's fairly interesting. And with those magic words *Free admission* it's worth a short visit if you get the chance. Covering items from the era of Muffin the Mule (sadly he was only on show near the start) to the Teletubbies, there is quite a variety of items on show.

With nearly all of the original Woodentops, plus Sooty, The Wombles and The Herbs, it's quite fun to see how they now look after all this time. If you are a fan of *Trumpton*, they are there too, as is the tortoise from *Bill and Ben*, Items from *Rainbow* and *Rosie and Jim*, and who remembers Channel Four's Pob? You will find Rupert and friends from ITC's 1970s production using marionettes; so sadly neglected these days *The Adventures of Rupert the Bear*, many episodes of which may have disappeared for some reason according to reference books! The original Teddy from *Andy Pandy* to name but a few, also Bertha, which at the time of writing was being repeated.

Not all the items on show are puppets and models; you also have some artwork too – Mr Benn and King Rollo, but the *Captain Pugwash* artwork has to be seen to be believed, with cardboard levers all over the place! And for fans of *Pipkins* you have Hartley Hare too – surely the campest children's character ever? – but no doubt someone else knows better.

So if you feel 'young' or just want to educate yourself, for free, visit Dudley soon.

*Address: Dudley Museum and Art Gallery, St James Road, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 1HU. Telephone 01384-815575. Open Mondays to Saturdays, 10am to 5pm, but not on Bank Holidays.*



*Sooty as you may not remember him - advertising OXO back in the early days of ITV*

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## BERNARD WILKIE'S PITFALLS

***This article was sent in five years ago and has only just surfaced... apologies!***

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The article Teletalk by Malcolm Burrell in the Summer 1993 edition was a revelation. To discover that there are other people who actually dig their own graves and prepare their own minefields was a thrill beyond compare. I had always hoped that we could start a club (tie designed by Dicky Howett?) and that I could be president, but now I realise there is someone much more fitted for that office than I. Here is a man who ruined things with such consummate dedication that I am not even fit to clean his shoes.

In homage to Malcolm B. and without wishing to become a contender I offer a couple of my own self-constructed pitfalls.

### **Freezily done**

It was a normal schools transmission from Studio E, Lime Grove and I was set to show how water, when sufficiently cooled, changes from a liquid to a solid; all good educational stuff.

It was before the era of 'Here's one I prepared earlier' and so we couldn't ask the presenter to take a specimen from the fridge. Instead I arranged for him to pour a beaker of water onto a chunk of super-cooled mild steel. It worked fine. The steel, cooled by dry-ice, was at a temperature way below freezing and the water, flowing over the surface, froze instantly.

During the lunch break I placed the steel on the studio floor, put a fresh block of dry-ice on the top and covered the two with sacks.

Ten minutes into transmission I uncovered my experiment, removed the dry-ice — and found the metal plate frozen to the floor.

All attempts to remove it failed and as the seconds ticked away I went through a pantomime of urgent hand-signals. I got the cameraman to tip his camera to an almost impossible inclination and handed the water to the presenter three inches above the floor.

It's possible that the director never knew his shot list had been rearranged, but he must have wondered why the laboratory bench had suddenly become covered in footprints.

### **Whose bright idea?**

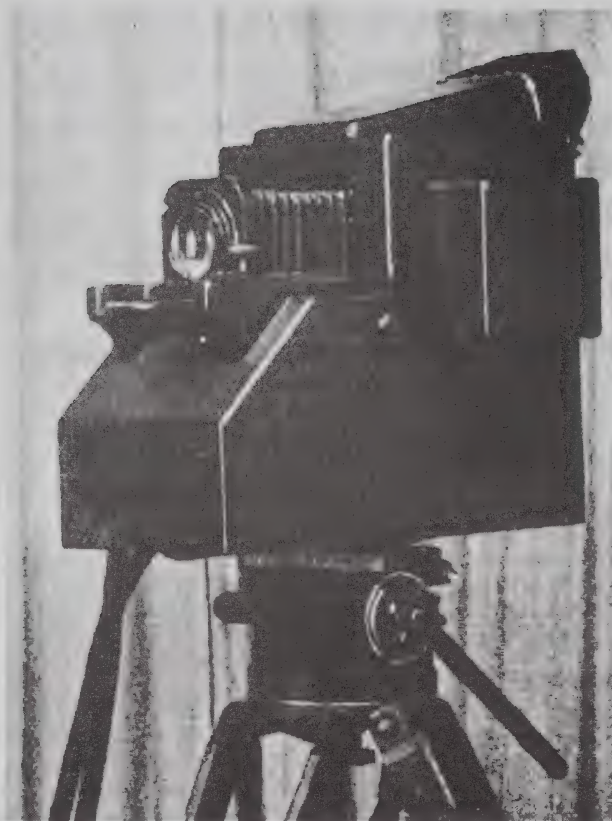
Testing a powerful Brock's rocket for *Quatermass 2*, Jack Kine (another member of the club) and I strapped it to a heavy wooden cartwheel which was lying around on the old White City site. Lighting the fuse, we retired to a safe distance.

The rocket fired like a jet engine and the wheel began to spin. It quickly twisted onto its rim and took off across the open site like The Great Panjandrum. It smashed into the boundary wall and the rocket, now unencumbered, flew down Wood Lane at about head height, exploding in a brilliant display of blue lights in the vicinity of White City underground station.

In my defence I must point out that these were only rehearsals for the really great cock-ups that came later.

Bernard Wilkie  
Member of the 'I'm a Plonker' club.





***Dicky Howett writes:*** This is one of RCA's earliest electronic cameras and looks very much like an Emitron! The viewfinder is on the top looking into a mirror reflection of the mosaic.



**Dicky Howett's Box Brownie snapped this Marconi Mk III on location in The Mall in 1963. Note the long directional mic attached to the top of the camera. The zoom lens is a TTH Studio Varotal Mk2.**

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## RECORDING RADAR'S PAST

**Ian Brown**

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Until a few years ago, little had been recorded of the history and development of radar. Although a great many books had touched on the subject, and few books about the Battle of Britain do not make mention of the vital contribution of radar to British success, the authors of such books invariably gave an inaccurate account. Similarly, aviation museums gave little, if any, space in their displays for radar equipment, concentrating almost solely on aircraft. Little interest was expressed in the technology which made it impossible for the aircraft on display to achieve success in combat and little, if anything, was being done to record the history of radar accurately.

It was against this background that the Historical Radar Archive was set up in February 1990 by Squadron Leader Mike Dean, MBE, based on years of research prior to that point. The aims of the Archive are to preserve radar history, enhance museum facilities, the co-ordination of research and hardware preservation and to promote interest in radar history.

Eight years down the line and the Historical Radar Archive continues to carry out this work. It has preserved a tremendous amount of information held in private hands and thus potentially in danger of being destroyed. The collection of the Historical Radar Archive now consists of tens of thousands of period photographs, interviews and correspondence with thousands of radar veterans, several hours of historical film, etc. The Archive also contains copies of many hundreds of official files that provide the definitive account of the history of radar. The Archive now has a larger collection on radar than many official archives, such as the Imperial War Museum. The author has, for example, around 600 photographs of wartime ground radar stations in Scotland. As a result of this extensive collection, the Historical Radar Archive has become a focus for researchers and individuals interested in radar history. Enquiries have been received from the north of Shetland to the south coast of England and from Canada, the United States and New Zealand, as well as many other countries. The Archive is glad to do what it can to co-ordinate research and to help promote interest in the subject and has been able to help many individuals and organisations (including voluntary societies and government bodies) with their queries. It should be mentioned, however, that the Historical Radar Archive consists of only a few researchers, funding their work from their personal incomes. This has to pay the considerable costs of copying photographs and documents, correspondence, conducting interviews, etc. Consequently, it is essential that any letters include a stamped, addressed envelope; they cannot be answered otherwise.

The research which contributes to the Archive is an ongoing process and any material relevant to the Historical Radar Archive is always welcome. Any official records, photographs, unit records, personal documentation (such as unit Christmas menus, passes, etc), personal accounts, etc, are all gratefully received, whether it is a donation to the Archive or on loan to be copied. If you served on radar, or have information about the history of radar, please contact the Historical Radar Archive at the address below and help preserve this vitally important part of our history.

Ian Brown, Historical Radar Archive, 3 Kingsmuir Crescent, Peebles, Scotland, EH45 9AB. Tel: 01721-723597, e-mail: [Ian\\_Brown\\_HRA@msn.com](mailto:Ian_Brown_HRA@msn.com)

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## FROM OUR WORKSHOP

### *Practical Hints and Tips by Tudor Gwilliam-Rees*

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**RESISTORS** – boring carbon and wirewound thingies inside radios and amplifiers. They don't appear to do much – but by golly don't they cause trouble?!? So what awful things happen to these dull basic lumps of carbon or wire?

**Carbon resistors** are widely used in radios and usually with age or being overloaded (back to those leaky capacitors again!) increase dramatically in value. Sometimes this increase is not important;



there is, normally, no need to change grid leak, AVC feed or resistors in other low current applications unless the value has increased many hundreds of per cent. I have known of collectors change every resistor because they were outside the original 20% tolerance – there is just no need to do this! However, screen-grid feed, oscillator, anode, cathode bias resistors plus others that have to work hard for a living and pass a few milliamps upwards can cause problems with low gain, instability, oscillation, etc. if their value has changed. It does no harm to go around with an ohmmeter (set power off and HT discharged if you want to keep your meter). Also a good idea to measure the volts and compare to the circuit (do allow for the high ohms per volt of modern meters, i.e. higher readings in certain positions). Carbon resistors usually cannot be repaired – but modern resistors, being so small, can be placed inside or against the body if so wished to maintain originality.

Another quite common resistor problem is the production of noise, such as hiss (particularly in audio amplifiers) and crackles – sometimes very hard to crack down. Using a hair drier or the printed circuit freezer aerosol can help in location. If you're trying to 'improve' on distortion figures in valve equipment, modern resistors can help tremendously with the readings but as to whether it will sound any better I doubt.

**Wirewound resistors** are usually employed in a position of power – literally – for instance as mains droppers (burning card backs and cabinets) dissipating watts galore. Generally speaking they are very reliable and maintain their resistance value, but when they fail it is usually completely and repair pretty well impossible (although with some of the older type of mains droppers with exposed elements a mechanical repair can be sometimes effected – but tends to be only a temporary affair if attempted, the wire failing again at another point quite soon). Replacement can be difficult but there is usually some compromise that can be reached with modern components. Experiments with silicon diodes or barretters can also be useful with AC/DC sets.

In many early radios a bank of resistors or a long tube-tapped wirewound resistor are used as potential dividers across the HT line. If one section is broken a modern wirewound resistor – watts calculated by Ohm's law – can be secreted away on the component.

- ❖ A goodly selection of vintage and new components is available from SAVOY HILL PUBLICATIONS, 50 Meddon Street, Bideford, EX39 2EQ (01237-424280, fax 01237-424280).

## PYE-EYED

***Dicky Howett continues his series about television hardware and presents a history of the ubiquitous image orthicon television camera, the Pye Mk 3***

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To put it frankly, the Pye Mk 3 three-inch image orthicon camera was just a fraction too clever for its own good. For starters, it did things no other television camera could. For its time (1951), the camera was technologically way ahead of the competition. For example, the camera could be totally remote-controlled. An engineer sitting in the gallery or OB van could swing the lens turret, change the iris and pull the focus, all with the aid of knobs, wheels and push buttons. Also, with the aid of dedicated attachments, the camera could be made to tilt 30 degrees above, and 40 degrees below horizontal as well as pan 280 degrees. About the only task the camera couldn't perform was make the tea and change its own valves. Remember, this was still the era of valve-driven electronics. A time when your average industrial computer had so many electron tubes it could have fitted comfortably the length of Coronation Street itself. In fact up at Granada a Valve Tale was told of how a television cameraman cooked his breakfast using solely the furnace-like heat radiating from a large camera control unit. (Actually, this apocryphal story ran throughout television, each studio substituting its own engineer, in turn varying the amounts of bacon and eggs!).

Meanwhile back at Pye, the idea of a fully automatic television camera found little favour with British broadcasters. It was assumed—perhaps correctly—that too many things could go wrong. Also, understandably, cameramen were a little wary of any sort of job-destroying technology. However, the Pye Mk 3 camera soon overcame this prejudice (the jobs of cameramen were safe, at least for the next 29 years) and eventually the camera became very popular.

Essentially, the Pye Mk 3 was a compact 3-inch image orthicon, four-lens monochrome television camera developed with a large eye on the export market. There were two basic models — the 2028, which ran 405 lines, and the 2014 which ran 525 and 625 line standards. A further, switchable version (the 2014E) could cope with an extra standard of 819 lines for French and Belgian television.

At the front end of the camera, the turret and lenses had some interesting and unique features. The (11-inch) turret itself was constructed with a peripheral ball race to withstand the strain imposed by the largest lens. Lens changing was accomplished by a motor drive in the turret controlled by a selector switch at the rear of the camera. When set in motion the turret rotated until the selected lens was in position. The turret then locked in place automatically. (The 'taking' lens was—looking from the front—at bottom left. This was indicated helpfully by a bold red arrow). The time it took to change

from one lens to one adjacent was 1½ seconds. To a lens opposite, the time was 2½ seconds (this speed could seem glacially slow to some cameramen used to manual turrets, swung in half the time). Nevertheless, a motorised turret was a useful labour-saving device, especially on outside broadcasts where the weight of a 40-inch telephoto lens on a manual turret could easily break a wrist.

The lens mounting plates for the Pye Mk 3s were unique to the camera. These plates were quite heavy (approx. 1½kg even with the lens barrel removed) and they were attached to the turret by locating pins and secured by large knurled nuts. The lenses (Watson or Dallmeyer in Britain) were manufactured with a special aperture barrel that connected by clogged teeth to a central clogged motorised iris wheel. The iris on all four lenses could then, as mentioned, be controlled from the gallery—or on override—by the cameraman himself. Also, the lens mount had a built-in resistor that through metal sensors, automatically came into circuit. Because the focus control was entirely servo-operated, the image orthicon tube could be positioned correctly in relation to any particular lens. In other words, the picture tube was automatically racked back or forth to maintain focus, compensating for the change in focal length after each turret change.

Image focussing was performed by large hand-operated wheels situated at either side of the camera, with a switch selecting left or right or 'Remote'. As the focussing was electrical the picture tube (and the focus) would remain locked irrespective of the camera angle of tilt (cameras with manual focussing—especially the weighty Marconi Mk III—meant that the cameraman had to hang on to his controls otherwise the I.O. tube could rush headlong, due to gravity, resulting in a nasty and possibly costly 'clunk').

The Pye Mk 3 had a fixed 5-inch viewfinder that together with the servo unit could be swung upwards and outwards away from the camera for ease of maintenance. Flying leads could be attached to allow adjustments to be performed whilst the camera was running. The camera had an all-up weight of 48kg, which for its size was somewhat heavy. In fact, as the author can attest, the Pye Mk 3 is quite a little weight to lug around.

Heavy weight or not, the camera was a success in Europe, the Middle East (Iraq), the Far East (Thailand) and particularly the USA where it was marketed by an outfit called General Precision Laboratory Inc who re-badged the camera with an identical 'PYE' badge shape bearing the letters 'GPL' (the 1953 edition of the American book by Rudy Bretz, **Techniques of Television Production**, refers to the Pye camera *only* as the GPL. But by the second edition in 1962, Bretz correctly and belatedly identifies the Pye camera *as* a Pye camera (for good measure, Bretz includes also three further models of British camera, the EMI 203, The Marconi Mk IV and the Pye Mk 5. Of course by 1962, British monochrome television cameras had conquered the world!).

Returning to 1951, the BBC commissioned from Pye an OB unit equipped with three Mk 3 cameras and this unit first went into action on November 14th, covering a London snooker tournament at Leicester Square Hall. The Television Newsreel of the time described the camera with typical BBC understatement as being "...of new design; it's a step to doing away with the cameraman altogether...in reality this will only happen if the camera—space is too restricted to allow for a cameraman to fit ..."



Reassuring stuff, especially for obese cameramen. The commentary went on to add, "...it (the camera) will give a picture much the same as all other outside broadcast cameras now in use."

In fact the Pye Mk 3 would have produced somewhat better pictures. However, it matched well with the Marconi Mk I (and IB) camera, then in BBC OB use.

The original casing of the Pye Mk 3 camera (two-tone blue) had nothing much in the way of ventilation. There was just a single internal fan to keep the components at a stable temperature. Later versions of the camera-casing had various sloping external vents and a so-called 'export' type had a double fan arrangement (you can spot the double-fan types of Pye Mk 3 camera because they have oblong 'tin sheds' on the top). Also on the original models, the 'artiste' cue lamps were just a couple of small red lights situated on both sides of the turret at the top. Later came varieties of top-mounted cue light which were actually familiar car brake lights of the time (wedge or dome shape) from Lucas (why invent it if you can buy it off the shelf at Halford's?).

The BBC equipped two regions with Pye Mk 3s for outside broadcast use and also for a certain amount of 'roll-in' studio work. Scotland had MCR (Mobile Control Room) 11 and the West of England had MCR 12, each with three Pye cameras (when the Scottish OB unit came down to augment the 1953 Coronation outside broadcast camera force, one of their vans, situated at Hyde Park displayed proudly the BBC Scottish Region 'flag' just to keep up morale).

No BBC London studio was ever equipped with Pye Mk 3s. The reason for this was technical prejudice. The BBC in the early nineteen fifties was not at all keen on 3-inch image orthicon tubes for 'serious' studio work, preferring Photicons, Pesticons or the more 'photographic' CPS Emitrons. Image orthicon pick-up tubes were tolerated at the BBC only for their high sensitivity and consequent valuable use in low-light OB situations. The exact opposite was true for commercial television. It started transmitting using *only* image orthicons! When ATV began in 1955 it was run exclusively on Pye Mk 3s. Pyes were installed at ATV's Wood Green Empire, the Hackney Empire, Highbury Studios, and the Foley Street Master Control presentation studio. ATV's OB fleet was all Pye and there are many photographs showing Pye Mk 3 cameras in action, some installed at the London Palladium for that popular Sunday night variety show. Granada Television equipped its fleet of 'Travelling Eyes' with Pyes and when 'Studio 4' in Manchester opened for local programming, Pye 3s were wheeled in (the Beatles' first television appearance—1962— in Studio 4 was captured by Granada's Pye cameras). Then there was the Chelsea Palace in London from whence came 'Chelsea at Nine' and 'The Army Game', again using Pye Mk 3 cameras.

(Continuing the subject of technical prejudice it must be noted that a 3-inch image orthicon-sourced picture had a tendency to look 'embossed' or white-edged. This factor probably helped at the receiving end, given the generally poor picture reproduction quality of some home receivers. ITV studio pictures thus tended to have a grainy, bright, 'dynamic' appearance over the arguably softer non-image orthicon BBC pictures).

ITN, Scottish Television, ABC TV and Anglia Television all used Pyes (Anglia's little give-away booklet from 1959 **Anglia Television—The Creation of a Station** features many pictures of Pye Mk 3s on the job as it were). It's a tribute to the good robust design and longevity of the equipment

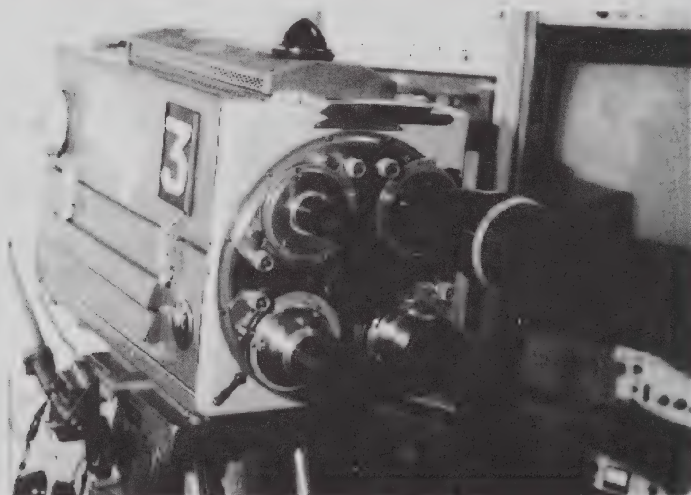
that most of commercial television's Pye cameras were still running (all on 405 lines) right up to the advent (in 1969) of all-channel colour television.

The Pye Mk III camera was withdrawn from sale in 1960 after an estimated world-wide sale of 250 units. So where are these Pye Mk 3 cameras now? Do any survive? The answer to that is yes, and in some quantity. For all those telly camera detectives on the hunt for relics, the BBC ran Pye 3s —ex-Bristol—for a while in 1972 at their Wood Norton training centre and, of course, foreign studios kept their monochrome kit going well into the nineteen seventies. So some cameras must still reside neglected in store cupboards, mud huts, or continental garden sheds.

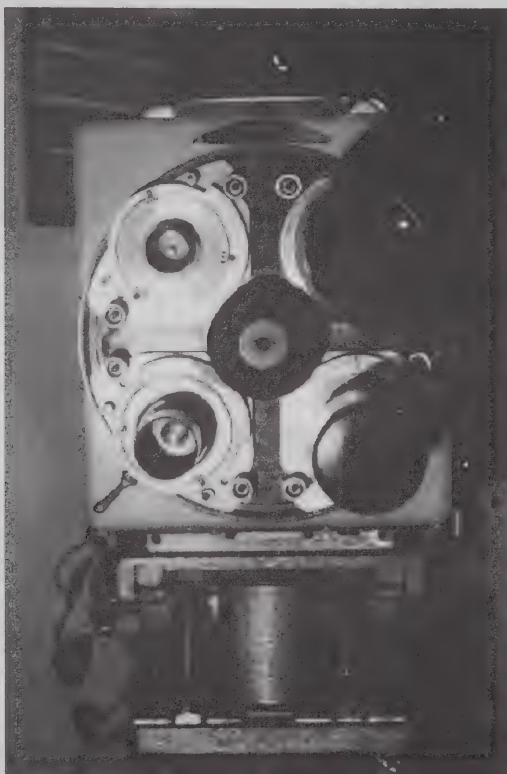
These days, not surprising considering the amount bought, most of the old preserved Pyses are ex-ATV (in some cases still sporting those distinctive 'yellow teeth' coloured car number plate letters — a style called Bluemels Pyramid 11). By the start of colour television in Britain, ATV still had the lion's share of operational Pye Mk 3 cameras. In 1970 it (reasonably cheaply) disposed of the cameras to all-comers. Legend has it that during one such sale, from ATV's Elstree OB base, an enthusiast bought *five* Pye Mk 3s (plus an OB van and even an Ampex VR 1000 2-inch Quad video machine).

Recently, in serendipity mode the author met an ex-ATV engineer who confessed to being at that very same 1970 sale. On the lookout for souvenirs, he also acquired some Pye kit, but this time for free. He told me that during the sale he wandered over to a skip and discovered boxes and boxes of Pye Mk III camera lenses, a few of which were of the rare 40 inch 'folded' variety, all heaped up, ready for scrapping. Fortunately, the ATV engineer had the good sense to 'liberate' some of the lenses and keep them secure in his garage where they remain to this very day... But that, as they say, is another story!

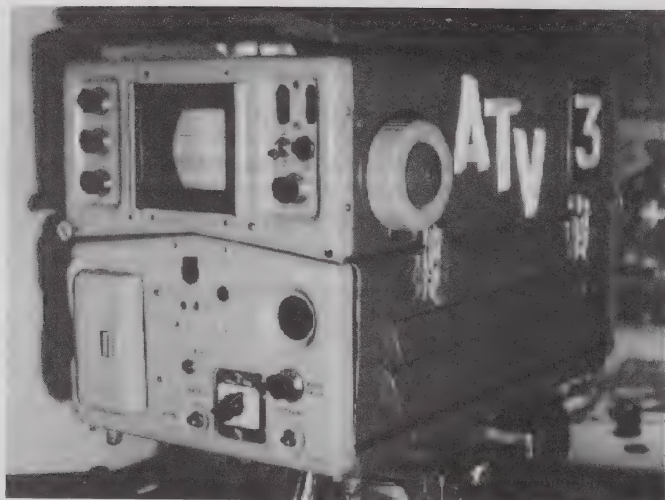
### **A fully-fledged Pye Mk 3, part of the Howett collection.**



**The business end of a Pye Mk 3. Note the lower left 'taking lens' arrow. The central black wheel is motorised and by means of matching cogged teeth on the lens rings, changes the aperture of the lenses.**

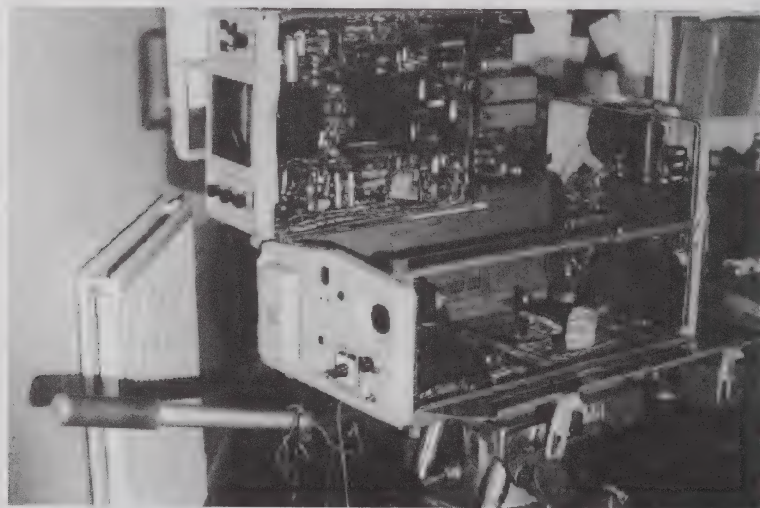


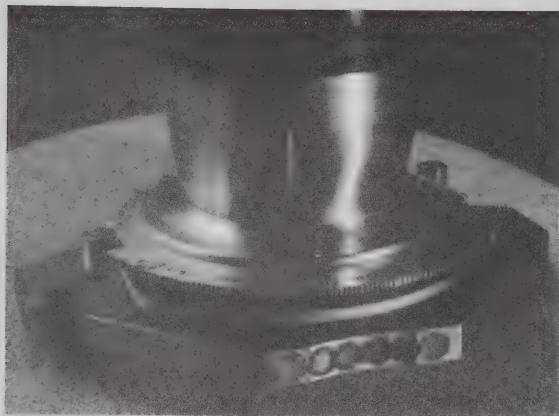




*Above:* **The back end of a Pye Mk 3.**

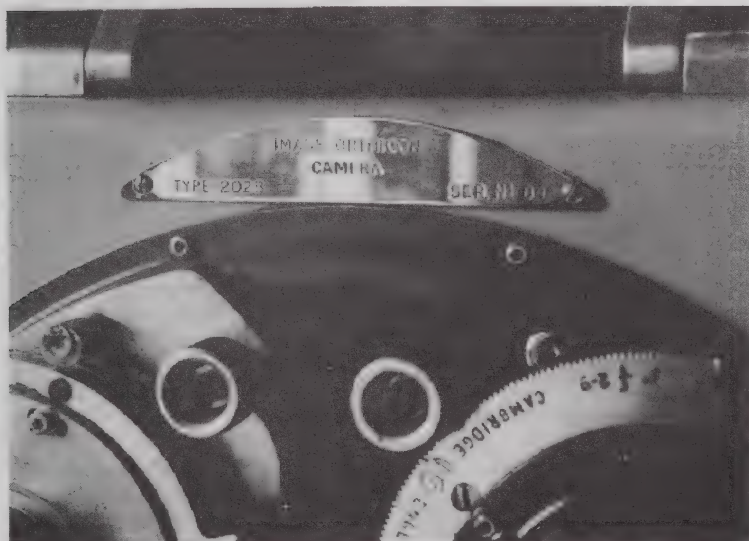
*Below:* **A strangely empty Pye Mk 3, hinged for ease of servicing.**





*Above:* The unique lens mount and electrical contact points that enable fixed resistors to reset the correct focus after each lens change (also used on the Pye Mk 2 and similar Thomson cameras made under licence from Pye).

*Below:* An elegant refinement not found on modern cameras: the engraved stainless steel identity plate of the Pye Mk 3.



**Andy Henderson writes: "I found in an old *Meccano Magazine* (July 1963) a two page article on a recreation of the ABC studios using Dinky Toys. The other page shows a really good picture of the main ABC Television building (in miniature)."**

## DINKY TOYS PRESENT THE A.B.C. OF TELEVISION

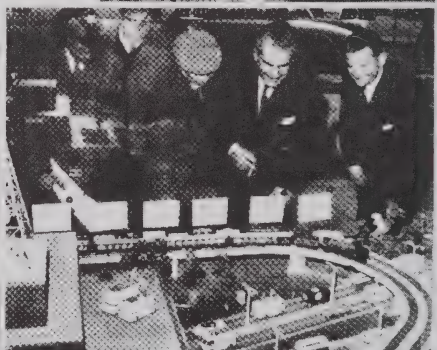
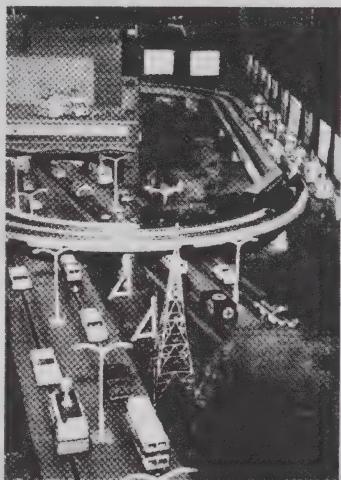
**D**INKY Toys Television Vans, cars and other vehicles, travelling round a window display in the heart of Manchester, collectively clock up more than 2,000 miles every week. Their daily "round trip" is in the region of 280 miles, the equivalent of a road journey from Manchester to Dundee, or to Tavistock, in Devon.

The vehicles—64 of them—are part of a mobile display which occupies the huge ground floor windows of A.B.C.

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**By THE EDITOR**  
~~~~~

modern block of offices in Mount Street, Manchester. On specially-made conveyor belts they zip along the roads that form a prominent feature of the layout. Trees, hills and villages make it completely realistic, and the centrepiece is a model of a television centre.

Top picture: Dinky Toys A.B.C. Television Vans move along the tracks leading to and from the television centre, while Hornby Dublo Locomotives pass each other on the overhead track which also forms part of the A.B.C. window display. Below (left): Mr. David Barry, Northern Advertising Manager, A.B.C. Television, watched by the Editor of the "Meccano Magazine", watches on the base display in the window of Television House. Right: Outside the building, Mr. Barry and the Editor are joined by three enthusiasts as they admire the display.





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## RING OUT THE OLD!

### Dicky Howett recalls ABC Television at Didsbury

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In a residential street on the outskirts of Manchester, television history has been demolished. By the time you read these words, it's likely that the erstwhile home of ABC Television (you remember ABC Television?—come on now, that was back in the days when ITV *was* ITV!) will be no more. This seems the pre-ordained fate of all pioneer television establishments. The aforementioned ABCtv home was originally a cinema called the ABC Capitol, and it was situated in Parrs Wood Road, Didsbury, Manchester. All that now remains of this television studio is an unexciting pile of non-televisual rubble. The Capitol Cinema once stood proud as the northern headquarters of ABC Television with its famous top-rated flagship drama programme, 'Armchair Theatre'.

The Capitol at Didsbury was not the first choice for ABC Television. Converting, in some haste, ancient theatres and cinemas into television studios was not ideal. But the management of the (then) new commercial television companies couldn't afford to be too fussy. ABC Television had to be 'on air' at the advertised date. Advertising cash dictated!

Howard Thomas in his book 'With an Independent Air' recounts, "*We were due on the air in the North on 1st May 1956, three months after our Midlands opening. Lancashire was already promising to be a county of television addicts. ABC cinemas had several white elephants in the region that they would be happy to sell. One of their largest and best equipped cinemas (and one of the emptiest) was the Capitol at Didsbury which had been built as a combined cinema and theatre at a time when the industry was augmenting its film shows with lavish stage spectaculars.*

*This was the sixth cinema in the Manchester area I had visited. As I climbed to the projection booth high at the back I realised that this theatre, with its ample stage and auditorium, with dressing rooms and other facilities, was the right place for us. Adjoining was a vast car park, ideal for the housing of our three outside broadcast units and their satellite vehicles. But I did not regard ABC Television as fully on the air until we had the Manchester studios in operation. It was a tight schedule and our engineers, some of them poached from Marconi's, worked all night to complete the final wiring of the Didsbury control room. We also constructed the main studio floor above the roomy stage and into the stalls, still leaving room for an audience that could be intimately close to the performers. The outsize cinema auditorium became one large television studio, with a second and more compact studio at balcony level, where we were able to produce less ambitious programmes such as panel games and advertising magazines".*

The main studio (Studio 1) was approximately 100ft x50ft. It was also a rather irregular shape. However, the studio was a fine production base with all amenities on tap, not least a handy pub called *The Parr's Wood* directly opposite the studio. After transmission, pressured thespians could relieve

tension at the drop of a pint. The rigors of live weekly drama could take their toll. Actors could literally die for their art, as happened once at Didsbury during a 1958 live *Armchair Theatre* production entitled 'Underground'. An actor expired between 'part one' and 'part two', leaving the director William Kotcheff with no option but to wing it for the remainder of the play.

Eventually, ABC television drama production moved south to Teddington and latterly the redundant Capitol studios reverted to student-theatre use, run by Manchester Metropolitan University. Alumni included Julie Walters.



**The 'Capitol Cinema' theatre 1996.**



**A view of the Didsbury studio floor. Three Marconi Mk III cameras surround the action.**



## PUZZLE CORNER

### *...or When We Were Young*

If all the colour supplements can have candid photos of famous stars when they were young and undiscovered, why can't we? So see if you can guess the identity of this well-known contributor to *405 Alive*? Heaven knows, it's not difficult – and no, it's not the editor!



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## PAST TIMES

### **Mark Oldridge scans some views and reviews from the past**

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From *Practical and Amateur Wireless*, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1936.

#### **The Television Film, November 2nd**

*Television Comes to London*, the new BBC film, had its premiere in the evening transmission from Alexandra Palace on November 2nd. Produced by Gerald Cock, Director of Television and Dallas Bower, this film gave a vivid picture of the establishment of the television service, dealing first with the reconstruction of the East Corner and Tower of Alexandra Palace. It showed also how the transmitting apparatus was constructed and tested in the laboratories of the Marconi EMI. Company and the Baird Company. The scene shifted once more to Alexandra Palace, and televiewers were given glimpses of the tower under construction. Incidentally these shots were taken at considerable risk to the cameramen, who were swung aloft in a bo'sun's chair. Drawing towards its climax, the film portrayed the 'Station in Being.' Various departments were seen at work: the announcers in the make-up room; a typical programme being presented in the studios; Adele Dixon singing *Television* in her first television performance, and, finally, the Television Orchestra, playing in uniform, in a series of ingenious camera shots. The commentary to *Television Comes to London* was by Cecil Lewis, and the narration was the announcer Leslie Mitchell. The photography has been carried out by Major L. G. Barbrook and James Carr

However, just a few weeks later...

From *Practical and Amateur Wireless*, 5<sup>th</sup> December 1936

#### **On the Programme Side**

Steady improvement in the television pictures radiated from Alexandra Palace has been a noticeable feature since the service was inaugurated. The BBC engineers who are being trained to handle the scanning and transmitting equipment are slowly but surely mastering entirely new technique, and concurrently 'technical hitches' are being reduced thereby. On the programme side, however, certain criticisms have been made. First of all, complaint is made of the clock face interval picture, which, although useful, is kept on too long and over-emphasises the periods of waiting between programme items. The films are, on the whole, being handled satisfactorily, but care should be exercised to ensure that the film is not too dense. This is very noticeable in the BBC film *Television Comes to London*, where some of the shots show up as an almost black picture. Furthermore, this film has been repeated so many times now that viewers are getting rather tired of the story it unfolds. It was revealed in the House of Commons the other day that the cost of the Alexandra Palace station was one hundred and ten thousand pounds, which leaves seventy thousand pounds from the original sum allocated, and is the money now being used for programmes and maintenance. No doubt this is being husbanded

until a further allocation is made, when it is hoped that it will not be necessary to radiate quite so many repeat programmes.

Following on from the note in the last *405 Alive* concerning the video release of *I was a Spy*, this item comes from the *Radio Times* Television Supplement, 12<sup>th</sup> February 1937.

### **NEWS FOR TELEVIEWERS: Ghost Story**

It is past 11pm. Mary Adams, Talks Producer, is writing letters in her armchair in her home. There is a reading lamp, well shaded, providing only a small pool of light, and the rest of the room is in darkness and shadow. But in one corner there is a small illuminated oblong, the screen of her television set, which has been switched off for sound and not for vision. Over an hour has passed since the programme finished, and the screen is blank. Then Mary Adams yawns. And as she gets up from her chair the television screen comes to life: a girl, beautiful and terrified, her eyes staring.... At Alexandra Palace all is normal. The engineers go on experimenting with their twelve-foot film loop of Madeleine Carroll in *I was a Spy*.

Also on the same page of news...

### **Advisory Committee's Decision**

At the end of last week the decision of the Television Advisory Committee was announced — that all Alexandra Palace transmissions would in future be by the Marconi EMI system. The news came too late for insertion in our previous issue.

From the *Radio Times*, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1949.

### **TALK OF THE WEEK** by 'The Scanner'

#### **Now here is the Weather Forecast.**

The first weather forecasts by television are to be inaugurated by the BBC in co-operation with the Meteorological Office on Friday evening — in time for the August Bank Holiday week-end. It will be a daily service. To illustrate the forecast read by an announcer, two weather charts of the British Isles will be televised every evening. The first will show the prevailing barometric and weather conditions of the evening of transmission; the second, the conditions forecast for the period 8.0 am. to midnight the following day. There will be an additional forecast for as far ahead as practicable. Weather forecasts will be televised after the evening programme and immediately before the news. On Friday the service will be introduced by Dr James M Stagg, Deputy Director of the Meteorological Office, who has co-operated in a number of preliminary tests in the television studios.

#### **No Excuse for Latecomers.**

In our house there are five clocks. One is broken, three never agree and the fifth is purely ornamental. My watch I frequently forget to wind. The result is that I am often in my seat before the screen at least five minutes too early. If I am only four minutes, fifty five seconds late then I don't know how long the



tuning signal has been on, whether there is time to give the cat her supper or take another quick look at the potato patch.

Bad management you say, and quite rightly so, but I know the same state of affairs exists in other television homes. However, there will be no such excuse for such bad management after Sunday. A new tuning-signal caption card has been devised. The light gradation scales will be retained and so will the small centre square of vertical lines, but this will form the centrepiece of that most useful piece of mechanism, a clock. If you are in the same room as the receiver you will know from the clock exactly how much time you have to spare. If you in the next room you will know from the music when the programme will start. The monotonous tuning note is being replaced by a special arrangement by Max Saunders of the traditional airs, *Early One Morning*, *Ash Grove*, *Londonderry Air* and *The Campbells are Coming*. It has been recorded by an orchestra of woodwind and strings under the baton of Eric Robinson. In addition slight alterations have been made to the introductory film sequence of Alexandra Palace. The film will begin with the familiar long shot of the Palace aerial mast and, instead of being brought into close-up by a series of 'cuts', the mast will be approached in one long continuous shot. Eric Coates' familiar *Television March* will still introduce the programme, but it has been re-scored.

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## FOND MEMORIES

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*There is a clip of film from May 1964 of Mary Whitehouse launching her 'Clean Up TV' campaign. In it she says: "Last Thursday at 6.35pm, I saw the dirtiest programme... ". What was it, and was it turned into a series?*

This question was put to the lady on her retirement and she confessed that she could not remember. Unfortunately, there was no barrister present to claim, as they would in a court of law, that there had been in fact no 'dirty programme'.

In an episode of *Till Death Us Do Part*, Alf Gamett's friend, Bert, remarks that, after seeing Mrs Whitehouse complaining yet again about hardcore pornography on television, he had sat up all night hoping to see some for himself and was most disappointed when it did not appear. He went on to wonder how someone of her apparent intelligence could claim to be an expert on something that palpably did not exist. Keith Ackermann, Tilbury, Essex.

The programme to which Mrs Whitehouse referred was *Between The Lines*. It ran for six episodes. Mrs Whitehouse had viewed, I think, the first episode (transmitted on 30th April 1964 on BBC1 at 6.35pm), which featured Tom Conti among others. The programme was billed as "A series of light-hearted enquiries into matters of no

importance" and was written by Chris Hanley. Whether any episodes still remain within the BBC archives, or what it was that so upset Mrs Whitehouse, I cannot say and wish I knew.

Olwen Terris, Chief Cataloguer,  
National Film & Television Archive, London.

- ❖ Newspaper cutting contributed by Andy Henderson, who adds: "I meant to mention that the *Between The Line* programme that's mentioned in the *Guardian* clip has at least one episode extant in BBC Scotland's archive. It has Fulton Mackay in it too! Why I know this, but the National Film library cataloguer doesn't is very telling – does he know his job?"

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## JUST ACT NATURALLY?

**Extract from *THIS IS LONDON*, pre-war BBC radio announcer Stuart Hibberd's autobiography from 1950. His recollections of a pre-war television studio are apposite, says Dicky Howett**

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".....I went to Alexandra Palace to take the place of Vernon Bartlett in a television programme, as he had had to go abroad at very short notice. I rehearsed the script with Mrs. Adams, the producer, and Horrabin, the artist, who was to draw maps of Central Europe illustrating the international situation in terms of frontiers. I found the surroundings very strange, with glaring lights above, and groups of people standing around in the studio during rehearsal. I was also affected by the uncanny action of the slowly moving camera and its crew, creeping silently towards me on its rubber-tyre trolley, and all the time one had to sit there and try to be natural, as though nothing was happening anywhere near. Poor Horrabin was new to it, so was I, but my broadcasting experience helped me, and I had been filmed before. He was extremely nervous, and once or twice I had to step in and come to his rescue. His drawings were very clever and clear on the screen. Subsequently he became one of the television star turns."

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## DISCOVERED ON THE INTERNET

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### Test cards in entertainment media

Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull has an album called *Walk into Light* with a pic of him placed in a SMPTE card. Joe Michael Straczynsky has included some spoof RCA Indian Head test cards in the *Babylon 5* series. The Kurt Russell film *Used Cars* has a RETMA card in the transmitter hack scene. A French film (title I forget) set in the sixties has a good close-in shot of the test card at

close down as a woman has fallen asleep watching tv; why didn't I have in the machine? A Canadian documentary on ecology (title I forget) started with an old CBC test card (no tape in machine again).

Does any one remember stereo/quad test LPs and tapes from the late 1960s and early 70s that had test cards on the cover/box. I recall a Picasso and a RCA variant being used but I can't remember who produced them.

Mike

The Indian Head is probably *the* classic American test pattern and has popped up in a lot of places. I did see the RETMA pattern in *A Hard Day's Night*, being used to adjust a monitor on the stage, and there was a film in the early 1970s (whose title I've forgotten) about a bank robbery in Germany that shows one of the plotters taking on the phone one morning while the RETMA pattern and test card music are playing in the background! Dunno why it wasn't FuBK...

Ed Ellers

Date: Fri, 10 Jul 98 08:36:04 -0400  
From: Elizabeth McLeod <lizmcl@midcoast.com>  
Subject: **Overlapping Media**

A couple of thoughts on the question of radio shows overlapping with TV... This was rather common during the pre-WW2 era, with a number of radio programs being simultaneously shown on television.

The earliest such incident took place in 1930, when station W1XAV in Boston – an experimental outlet using the 30-line Baird/Jenkins mechanical TV system – simulcast a portion of the Fox Fur Trappers orchestra program, a radio feature heard over CBS for I. J. Fox furriers. The experiment drew the ire of the FRC, which had explicitly prohibited commercials on TV – even freebies such as this one.

Many other radio personalities appeared on experimental telecasts during the thirties, including Ed Wynn and Graham McNamee (characteristically, Wynn was terrified), Amos 'n' Andy, Ted Husing, Kate Smith, the Boswell Sisters, Milton Berle, and Hildegard.

The widespread use of television at the 1939 New York Worlds Fair offered additional opportunities for radio personalities to sample the new medium – perhaps the most notable such incident during the fair was a simulcast from the fairground of the popular radio human interest program *Vox Pop*.

Once NBC's experimental station W2XBS went commercial as WNBT in 1941, several radio sponsors took tentative steps to bring their programs into the new medium. Beginning on July 1st of that year, Sunoco began simulcasting Lowell Thomas's evening newscast – Thomas was shown seated at a table with a Sunoco gas pump globe prominently displayed on a shelf behind him.

Other radio transplants premiering over WNBT that same evening included Lever Brothers' *Uncle Jim's Question Bee* with Jim McWilliams, and Proctor and Gamble's *Truth Or Consequences*, with Ralph Edwards.



Sustaining shows were also simulcast on occasion – *America's Town Meeting Of The Air* was a frequent television feature during 1941 and early 1942.

The war slowed progress in television, but once hostilities were over, the new medium was ready to roar forward. Many enduring radio programs were doing TV versions by decade's end, and the trend would continue into the early 50s. A short and incomplete list of programs whose radio and TV runs overlapped during this period...

Jack Benny (seen on TV every other week during the early 50s), Bob Hope (usually seen on TV on a rotating basis with other hosts), Milton Berle (who did a radio show for Texaco in 1948-49, even as his TV program for the same sponsor was catching on,) *The Goldbergs* (in a half-hour, non-serial version), *Amos 'n' Andy* (different casts for radio and TV, but the TV version often recycled radio scripts), *You Bet Your Life* (with differing radio and TV edits from the same master), *Dragnet*, *Our Miss Brooks*, *The Great Gildersleeve*, *Ozzie and Harriet*, the *Quiz Kids*, and *Meet The Press*.

Date: Fri, 10 Jul 98 10:29:33 -0400

From: Elizabeth McLeod <lizmcl@midcoast.com>

Subject: **Tape Longevity**

Ralph Laswell wonders,

>What is the expected longevity of an audio tape when stored at room  
>temperature? Any difference in reel to reel vs. cassette?

This is a difficult question – even the manufacturers cannot agree. The following is extracted from a Report on Television and Film Preservation issued by the Library of Congress in 1997. While videotape was the specific subject studied in this report, much of what is offered is applicable to all forms of magnetic tape:

"In 1991 Sony's best estimate of longevity for these materials was about 15 years. 3M indicated that its research was consistent with Sony's. Maxell declined to predict any life expectancy for its tape products, and a TDK representative indicated he knew of no published data on tape life expectancy by his company, BASF, and that 15 years was a good guess. Sony plotted much longer durability for the pigment; 24 years for one type and 96 years for another. It is important to note that these tests relate to the pigment or coating stability, and do not solve the problem of binder hydrolysis. Any tape, regardless of coating, can potentially turn into a sticky goo in extended storage at elevated temperatures and humidities."

15-20 years is a conservative estimate often heard when referring to video tape – but keep in mind that a video signal is far more complicated than an audio signal, and far easier to degrade. I have audio reels which are forty or more years old (and wire recordings that are nearly fifty years old) which show no indication of major signal loss from magnetic degradation. The Library of Congress report concludes that magnetic degradation of analog tape is really not an issue to be concerned about under most storage conditions.

But another factor to be considered besides the stability of the magnetic coating is the stability of the backing. Acetate tape, used up until the early-to-mid sixties, is chemically unstable. The backing is subject to 'vinegar

syndrome', a chemical reaction which releases acetic acid vapors (hence the strong smell of vinegar emanating from infected tapes.) Once this process has begun, it is almost impossible to stop. The tape will shrink, cup, buckle, become brittle, and flake apart – and the gases will go on infect other tapes as well!

Even acetate tapes which don't display vinegar syndrome are subject to steady deterioration. I have several NBC Audio Recording Service reels from the mid-sixties on acetate tape which have become badly cupped and embrittled – and these were carefully stored! If you hold any acetate tape – especially unique masters – you should already have transferred it to a more stable type of tape! Time is running out – don't kid yourself into thinking otherwise.

The modern polyester-backed tape is much more durable than the old acetate material, but it too can be damaged by poor storage or dirty playback equipment. And, of course, hydrolysis remains a major issue. Cassettes – including (and even especially) DAT cassettes – are not an acceptable medium for archival storage: the mechanism is simply too fragile. In addition, some cheaper cassette housings are made from recycled plastics which themselves are prone to chemical deterioration, and which emit gases that can damage the tape inside. Cassettes are fine for reference copies – but are no replacement for a proper reel master.

As for storage conditions, room temperature is actually a bit on high side of what's acceptable. Professional recommendations for archival storage specify a temperature between 50 and 68 degrees Fahrenheit and a relative humidity of around 30 per cent (and in no case over 50 per cent.) The National Archives and Records Administration specifications call for a constant temperature of 65 degrees and a relative humidity of 30 per cent – goals not impossible to achieve at home. Humidity is the most important concern: the higher the humidity the more likely you are to experience hydrolysis (and even fungus growth!). Proper storage will prolong the life of any form of tape – but never forget the essential fragility of the medium!

Date: Wed, 29 Jul 98 20:08:22 -0400

From: Elizabeth McLeod <lizmcl@midcoast.com>

Subject: **Syndication Query**

Andrew Emerson wonders,

>I've noticed that when networked American television shows went into  
>syndication, they changed their title. Why was this so and did the same  
>happen with radio shows?

I believe the titles for certain syndicated TV reruns were changed to avoid conflicts with the still-running network versions of the same shows – to avoid, in effect, competing with themselves. Thus when early TV episodes of *Dragnet* were first put into the syndication market it was under the title *Badge 714*. *Gunsmoke* was retitled *Marshall Dillon*, *Lassie* became *Jeff's Collie*, and *The Andy Griffith Show* became *Andy Of Mayberry*. The title changes seem to have occurred only for programs that entered syndication while still on the network – shows that went into reruns after leaving the net retained their original titles.

Such changes are, of course, no longer made – the title of an established network series is seen as a big part of its syndication market value, and as a valuable asset to the production company.

Date: Sat, 1 Aug 1998 23:25:58 -0400 (EDT)  
From: "A. Joseph Ross" <lawyer@world.std.com>  
To: "The '50s and '60s Nostalgia list." <nostalgia-l@usc.edu>  
Subject: **Syndication**

I don't know whether it happened every time, without fail, but it used to be very common for shows to change their name in syndication, in order not to compete with new episodes still appearing on the network. Thus, *Dragnet* became *Badge 714* in syndication, *Lassie* became *Jeff's Collie*, *Captain Gallant of the Foreign Legion* became *Foreign Legionaire*, etc. Interestingly enough, the *Danny Thomas Show*, originally called *Make Room for Daddy*, reverted to its original title in syndication, while new episodes ran under the new title. Eventually, the thinking changed, and this practice was discontinued.

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> August 1998  
Subject: **Old video tape formats**

I am the president of VidiPax, which is the largest magnetic media restoration company in the US – we specialize in Video and Audio and we have developed technology to restore old recordings and recordings that have had different types of problems. Our web site is [www.vidipax.com](http://www.vidipax.com)

In the process of supporting all of these old formats we have collected a HUGE collection of audio and video recorders including some of the collection formerly owned by Hal Layer and on deposit in the former Ampex Museum (now defunct). Our collection is available for viewing by appointment and one of these days we will get it up on the web.

We start at the beginning with a Poulsen Telegraphone and have MANY wire recorders. The machines include wire recorders that are telephone answering machines as well as others used in military applications and of course several minifons, the smallest wire recorders ever made. The collection includes prototypes as well as production machines and we have a Magnecorder prototype as well as others. In the video area we start with a VR1000B - and ours seems to be from around 1959 because it actually has a FEW transistors in the audio section - so it is a hybrid machine ... extremely rare. We have RCA's TR-22, TR-70B, TR-900, and in the Ampex camp AVR-2's and AVR-3's as well as a huge ACR-25 which was an early dual transport machine used for airing tv commercials. We have machines from IVC as well as a huge collection of video taperecorders including Sony 2" helical, Ampex 2" helical, Sony EV-310's, Cartravision, and many, many, many more. Of course we have more "consumer" oriented equipment like a Pixelvision, and all 3 flavors of 1970's "portapacks" JVC, Sony, and Panasonic. We support all EIAJ type formats - we have Funai/Technicolor, Vcord2, EIAJ cartrdge, AKAI, on and on, and on. All told I suspect that there are over 300 different machines of one sort or another including some in PAL. We also have modern formats: 1" A (VPR1As! as well as others), 1" B NTSC and PAL, 1" C in both Ampex and Sony flavors, DigiBeta, D2, D3, Hi8, BetacamSP and non-SP..... it keeps on going.

We also have a library where we store manuals and books on television technology history. Although we have not officially named the collection yet –



the goal is for it to be a national center for the study of recording technology. But whatever it is called our interest is in preserving recorded content in the best possible way and helping preserve our A/V heritage which includes the incredible technology used to create these important recordings.

Jim Lindner  
VidiPax  
The Magnetic Media Restoration Company  
jim@vidipax.com

### **Earliest US colour videotape recordings**

The oldest is the May 1958 dedication by President Eisenhower of NBC's new studio facility in Washington; the oldest surviving color entertainment program is an October 1958 NBC special, *An Evening With Fred Astaire*, his TV debut. Both of these were restored (i.e. carefully copied to digital tape) in 1988 by Ed Reitan of ITT, Don Kent of Los Angeles television station KTLA, and Dan Einstein of the UCLA Film and Television Archive.

Because of the special techniques that the old RCA TRT-1 (as seen in *The Knacker's Yard* in its B&W model) used to handle color, the team had to design special circuitry that could be added to an Ampex AVR-1 machine (from the early 1970s) to properly recover the color signal. "Evening" may be the only one-time TV special ever to have been awarded Emmys in more than one year, as it won nine at the time of its original broadcast, while Reitan, Kent and Einstein received a technical Emmy thirty years later for "Outstanding Achievement in Engineering Development."

Ed Ellers

### **Ready Steady Go! tapes**

As is well documented, Dave Clark bought the Ready, Steady, Go! archive from AR-TV when nobody cared.

In a *Record Collector* interview in 1992, he said that they were all kept under the stairs in tins at Thames, and that, ten years on, "new" episodes, previously undiscovered, were still turning up. He hoped to do something with them "soon", but the only episodes to turn up since then have been repeats of the 1485 editions detailed below. (A recent CD of 60s hits also said that the show would be returning to our screens soon, so !you never know).

He also said that when he made his compilation episodes, he offered them to the networks.. Channel Four got them, not because they'd offered most money (I wonder) but because they had offered its original slot (Friday teatime) for it to be shown.

According to Clark, the recordings (he said "tapes", I think, but this is debatable) were taken straight off-air, and many included the original commercial breaks. He and Channel Four took steps to try to show the episodes complete with original ads, but fairly obvious licensing problems etc. saw to that.

Therefore, the episodes of RSG that have been shown occasionally since 1985 are constructed thus:

1) Part One (actually compiled from different episodes - no one episode is a complete original, to my knowledge; the visual and audio quality can change quite dramatically)

2) IN PLACE OF THE COMMERCIAL BREAK, a short insert, sometimes made by AR-TV, sometimes not, of something relevant to the time, i.e. part of a Newsreel about The Beatles making *A Hard Day's Night* (sometimes not included to make way for the following).

3) IN PLACE OF THE COMMERCIAL BREAK, there would almost unfailingly be a clip of The Dave Clark Five miming to one or twelve of their hits.. This is on very clean VIDEOTAPE (probably first generation), but the audience is hilariously spliced in from a FILM of the audience from a Gerry and The Pacemakers concert. Of course, it was a nice effect, but Channel Four spoiled it by showing BOTH the insert that replaced the commercial break, AND THEN a new commercial break.

4) PART TWO. A compilation, as in Part One.

5) CREDITS. Quite often, the Rediffusion logo has been regenerated onto the programme, looking far too clean. The credits are also new. Following them are a load of new corporate logos for EMI Records, Dave Clark Productions, PMI, etc.

### **Charley Says**

Volume 2 of this videotape series of old public information films – Charley Live! – is in the shops and is considered excellent. In addition, the re-released Volume 1 has extra films on it.

There are eleven, including OLD FRIDGES CAN KILL, DON'T DAZZLE, DIP YOUR HEADLIGHTS (those are the particular five seconds that I shelled another twelve quid out for!), another TUFTY (Crossing the Road) in English AND Welsh, another COUNTRY CODE (in b/w)...

Overall, the quality is better than the original – i.e. the screen doesn't glare, and on the Pelican Crossing PIFS, you can actually SEE the green man. I was talking to somebody at Network video last week, and he said that they'd managed to find better quality sources for many of the films (but sadly not the "can cause injury, can cause injury" PIF), a few of which were dubbed from off-air video recordings on the original.

The only strange thing, having got used to the original tape, is that each PIF fades at the end...

Martin Fenton.

### **History note: Two Germans who made good, the American Way**

International Rectifier Corporation is now celebrating its 50th anniversary. Founder Eric Lidow is a classic American success story; he came to the U.S. from Germany in 1937 with only an EE degree from the University of Berlin and a camera – but almost immediately, he sold the camera to fund his first enterprise: building and selling 42 radios made from spare parts. In 1940 he founded Selenium Corp. of America and developed special selenium rectifiers for military applications. He sold the company in 1945 to Sperry Corp. and then founded IR in 1947. IR was a pioneer in developing silicon rectifiers, but

the company is perhaps better known for its power MOSFETs, which were developed by Eric's son, Alex, who has a PhD in solid-state physics from Stanford University.

TV station KTLA's Klaus Landsberg is another success story of a German refugee making good in the USA.

1916 - born in Berlin - became electrical engineer

1935 - built Braun tubes for Reich Radio Group - RRG

1936 - set up 1st TV broadcast of Olympics in Berlin

1938 - immigrated to U.S. - worked for NBC in New York

1939 - 1st commercial broadcast from World's Fair Apr. 30

1939 - built Allen DuMont's station WABD

1941 - sent by Paramount to LA to build W6XYZ

1942 to 1947 experimental

- mobile remote units

- electronic viewfinder for camera

- Zworykin's image orthicon tube 1945

- Paramount's kinescope 1947

1947 - 1st KTLA commercial broadcast Jan. 22

### YOU ALWAYS FIND OUT TOO LATE...

Sony's new high-end Handycam video camera includes an infra-red feature which allows shooting in the dark, but enterprising videographers have figured out that using the feature in daylight with a special filter enables the camera to see through light clothing. "When we developed this feature... we were thinking of people filming night views - their children sleeping, or perhaps the nocturnal behavior of animals," a spokesman said. Sony has modified the camera so that the infrared mode only works in the dark, but more than 870,000 of the cameras with the "see through" feature have already been sold. [Reuters]

*This-Is-True* comments this makes them the first consumer video product whose value actually went up after purchase.



*Long before the days of the Handycam these show-girls from the BBC's Café Continental were pictured getting ready for a show.*



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## THE BILL SMITH CHRONICLES

***Now that Bill Smith's recollections have taken him into the television era, we are delighted to 'simulcast' this series of articles, which have been running for some time in our sister publication, The Radiophile...***

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It soon became apparent that my decision to return home had been ill-considered, given that a few years were to elapse before a television service was introduced to the area. Although I was kept reasonably busy with repairs, it became increasingly obvious that I would not be able to support a wife on what I was making, so I therefore applied for a job in Aberdeen. Ironically, on returning from my subsequent interview and having accepted the position, John Moar was waiting for me with news that I was now the official repair man for the 'Wireless for the Blind', and that I would be responsible for maintaining all of their radios in the county. As you can well imagine it was a very tempting offer but being already committed, I had to turn it down.

My new place of employment was situated in Rose Street, just off Union Street, and it went under the name of Aberdeen TV Services; a rather optimistic assertion considering that it was to be a few years or so before television was to arrive in this area. Jim, my new employer was something of a character, and due to his many medical afflictions, was well acquainted with the majority of the local hospital doctors and staff.

His two major problems were severe conjunctivitis and alopecia, both of which failed to respond to the many treatments, meted out to him. His inflamed eyes gave him a somewhat wild appearance, and with his brown felt hat pulled well down to conceal the alopecia, he looked like an American gangster.

Jim's close association with the medical fraternity brought him a fair amount of trade in one way or other. Many of the doctors lived in the old, large granite houses in the select part of the city and one of my first jobs was to update their electric bell systems, some of which were still being supplied from leclanché cells! The work was pretty straightforward and entailed the fitting of transformers and a little rewiring and I found it to be a pleasant change from sitting at my bench. It was whilst engaged in a spot of rewiring that I happened to shine my torch down between the cavity wall and saw a beautiful hammer at the bottom. It looked spanking new and had obviously been dropped by a jobbing joiner at one time. Frustratingly it was impossible to obtain, and later I often thought about that hammer lying in that loft, especially years later when those focus magnets from the early television sets became redundant. A piece of string and one of those would have done the trick... I wonder perhaps if it is still there!

Another of the 'doctor jobs' concerned a washing machine in the basement laundry of one of these old houses. I say 'washing machine' but this one was

unlike any other I had ever seen. For a start it was heated by gas and the electricians had to be seen to be believed... all open and uncovered... indeed the contraption could have passed for one of Emmet's creations! A replacement fuse soon had the infernal machine working again and the lady of the house seemed to have it firmly under control. I noticed though, that she donned her wellies before commencing the wash... a wise move, given the cement floor and the abundance of water.

Jim seemed to feel that he should live up to his Aberdeen TV Services sign and had a horrible Masteradio television receiver set up in the shop, and had a massive Yagi aerial array pointed in the direction of the Kirk o' Shotts transmitter in the south of Scotland. Much time was spent in peering at the occasional shadowy figure and burst of speech breaking through the car ignition interference. We did have a minor scoop during Wimbledon however when the area experienced a 'pea-souper', and the reception was exceptionally good. The shop at this time was chock-a-block with seated viewers watching every ball being played, and Jim, of course took this turn of events to be a personal triumph on his part!

I had not been long started in my new job when who should appear at the shop but none other than my old instructor Mr Charles, from my wireless college days. He was after an odd valve, which we did not have in stock, but I took him round to the nearest wholesaler where we procured one. He was most pleased and we had a chat about old times. I must say that it was good to see the old buffer again, and he hadn't changed much... still the absent-minded professor!

Jim was very helpful and seemed to attract all types, from the highly respectable to the semi-spiv. One of the latter was a Mr Malcolm, who appeared to be able to supply you with anything you could possibly desire, at the right price. He was a charming, well turned-out fellow with a dominant personality, and although I confess that he was never anything other than honest in his transactions with me, I always had the idea that he was having the better of me. On my first meeting with him he sold me a lady's gold watch for my girlfriend at a ridiculously low price and to this day it is still ticking away merrily. He also got me involved in the sale of men's clothing (socks, vests, underpants, and even suits), and I was amazed at the money that could be made from this part-time occupation... much more than my regular job. Although I was never cut out to be a salesman, I was glad of the extra money to help pay for my forthcoming marriage.

Another of Jim's cronies was a self-employed electrician by the name of Bert, who helped us out from time to time. When not in overalls, Bert would arrive dressed nattily in a suit and wearing a white shirt and a flamboyant tie. Even in the coldest winter's day he would appear so, and I remember asking him if it was not cold without anything over his shirt, whereupon, with a knowing wink Bert undid a button to reveal a thick woolly sweater concealed underneath his white shirt! Hoover were on a recruiting drive for salesmen at this time and Bert decided to join them and duly went on their course. When he came back he took great delight in filling us in with the American-type spiel he was told to adopt when approaching a customer for a possible sale. He told

us that he was advised to appear at the customer's door with a cleaner trailing behind him and utter the words: **"This is my little friend... he follows me everywhere!"** No doubt this was how they did it in America but I would imagine that you would be in danger of being locked up if you were to try it here.



IN MY DAY, SANDCASTLES LOOKED LIKE SANDCASTLES!



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## IN THE WORKSHOP – 1

### ***Tony Duell maintains his Philips N1500 recorder***

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Here's a fix for the stock fault in N1500s (a cracked loading pulley, of course). You'll need the Philips N1500 service manual to follow this (and to actually do it!). You can get a photocopy from Mauritron. Numbers in brackets refer to parts on the main exploded mechanical diagram in the manual

OK, on with the fix. The stock mechanical fault on N1500s is that the loading pulley (194A) cracks where the grub screw/nut fits, and the pulley then doesn't clamp onto the motor shaft extension (193). It slips, and the machine won't lace up. And you have little chance of getting a new pulley, or of finding a good one in another old machine.

There's a way round this, though – modify the loading pulley so that it's no longer held on by the grubscrew. It's not that difficult, either.

- 1) Remove the top cover, cabinet and cassette housing as detailed in the service manual. Take out the video head disk and put it somewhere safe – that's another part that's impossible to get...
- 2) Remove the two microswitches (SK12, SK13) from the loading mechanism plate (176). Note the position of the insulating sheets. Remove the mechanism plate (176) itself.
- 3) If you have a later machine, with the safety cord running through the loading cord springs (109), then unhook the safety cord springs (182A) under the chassis, and pull the cord through to the top.
- 4) Remove the loading cord springs (109) from the lower drum, undo the grubscrew in the loading pulley, and take off the old pulley. Unwind the loading cords (if they've not come off already), and remove them from the pulley
- 5) Undo the grubscrew (195) in the shaft extension (193) and pull the extension off the motor shaft
- 6) OK, dismantling over. You now need to drill a 2mm hole through the shaft extension, at approximately the same height as the old grubscrew position. The mark left by the grubscrew should be visible. The easiest way to drill this hole is with a lathe (and a V-groove drill pad on the tailstock), but an electric drill in a drill stand will do if you don't have a lathe.
- 7) Put the pulley (194A) on the extension, with the hole in the extension at 90 degrees to the old grubscrew position, and the bottom of the pulley level with the bottom of the extension. Shine a light through the pulley (it's translucent plastic) and the new hole, and mark the hole position on the pulley boss. Drill a 2mm hole through the pulley boss, using the hole in the extension to guide the drill through to the other side of the pulley boss.

8) Remove the extension from the pulley, and enlarge the holes in the pulley boss to 2.5mm.

9) Tap the hole in the extension with an M2 thread.

10) Refit the extension to the loading motor (M3) spindle. Fit the loading cords to the pulley – touching the end of the cord with a soldering iron will fuse the strands together, making it a lot easier to thread. Put the pulley over the extension, and fix it in place with two M2 x 6mm screws into the new tapped hole.

11) Following the service manual, refit the loading cord, safety cord, loading mechanism, etc. To get the microswitch timing right, you'll probably have to remove and refit the mechanism plate (176) several times, moving the shaft extension by a couple of teeth each time until it loads up correctly.

12) Refit the head disk, cassette housing and cabinet.

❖ MAURITRON TECHNICAL SERVICES, 8 Cherry Tree Road,  
Chinnor, OX9 4QY (01844-351694, fax 01844-352554).

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## IN THE WORKSHOP – 2

### **Brian Renforth revisits some recent projects**

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I was particularly interested in Chris Worrow's account of his TMB 272 restoration in issue 37 as it's always interesting to hear of another's experiences. In the one I helped sort out, the EHT reservoir capacitor was ok, though at least we now know a source of spares.

As a footnote to my 2028 restoration feature in issue 36, it turns out that the set is in fact a 2028B, the difference here being in the degaussing circuit, employing the CK-1 double thermistor as made famous in the subsequent single-standard version. The set since has been thoroughly set-up, giving a really superb picture of the quality only obtained from colour difference CRT drive and is proving to be reliable in the main. Interesting to note that the bistable stops if the set's EHT control is set too low (this gives severe Hannover bars— every second line of colour missing or wrong). Presumably similar symptoms result if the line timebase valves are low emission. It pays to check here before delving into the decoder therefore.

The RGD CR20/CVC-5 20-inch is now working thanks to help from David Boynes and John Wakely in particular. The symptoms were a blank screen with shortwave radio signals on sound. The fault was on the IF sub-panel, which has to be removed and unsoldered from the main PCB; BF167s went in the BF127 positions and a BF199 in the BF123 (BF197) position to restore normal working.

A GEC 22-inch single-standard hybrid has also come my way. This developed IF trouble, though a BF199 didn't work in the BF197 (3rd vision IF) position, so a BF167 was tried, restoring normal service. Electrically this set has a lot in common with the dual-standard version, though the layout is

totally different, with the panels easy to remove and replace (lead colours on the PCB is a great help). Initially the PY500A was replaced by a silicon diode, then was reverted back to the valve (as in this 1972 model). The PCF80 sync separator was replaced by a transistor circuit, otherwise the two versions are pretty much the same electrically.

Something was missing, the colour beacon! The 4 push-button tuner was mounted with room for a 6-button one. The decoder is electrically identical so there was no reason why one couldn't be fitted. One went above the BBC1 button therefore and is just as sensitive and effective as in the 2028. The circuit is enclosed for comparison.

### COLOUR BEACON CIRCUITS

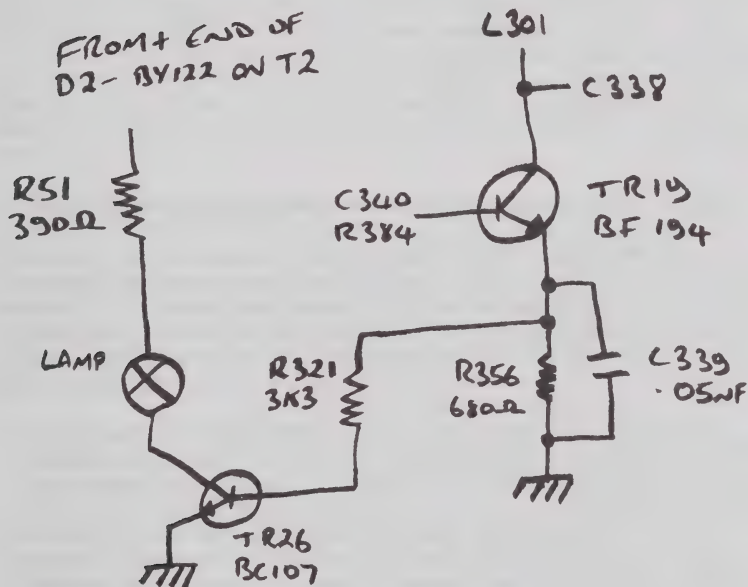
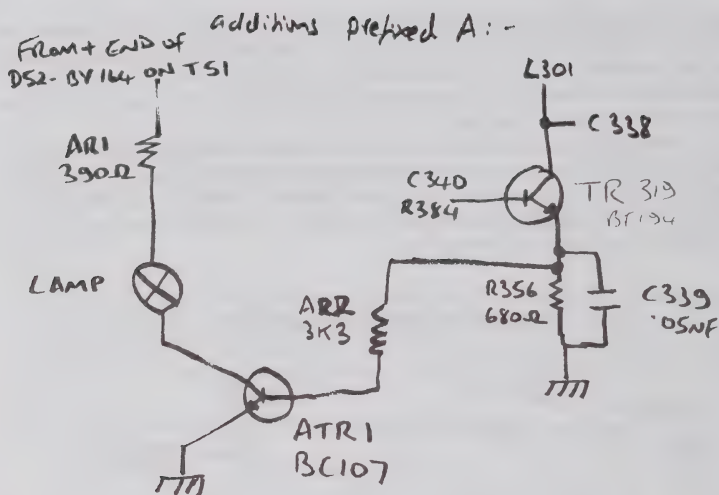


Fig. 1: Original 2028 circuit





**Fig. 2: 2040 Conversion (additional components prefixed A)**

As a footnote to the GEC 2000 series of popular monochrome sets, there was a model 2017 which offered VHF radio and carried the legend *19-inch Television, FM radio* on the front. This employed a conventional turret tuner with positions for HOME/THIRD/LIGHT. The 405-line timebase remained when radio was selected, with a very dim raster. I had one between 1978 and 1980 and was the basis for 405 VHF DX television reception. Does anyone have one of these models on them?

Steve Hale's 3649 Ferguson is probably a BRC 1400, which is capable of excellent results in addition to being straightforward to work on. They date from approximately 1967-70 and beyond (usually in 1500 cabinets with additional VHF tuners).

David Boynes on VHS recorders capable of producing ghost-free 405 playback— some JVC HR7200+ (Ferguson 3V29+) machines and their many clones do in fact produce ghosting on 405 playback; I have a Telefunken VR520 which doesn't, yet a JVC 7200 does. The latter employs a later design, identifiable by the lack of the MDA board situated in front of the cassette housing, which is left vacant and subsequently the stereo 7350 (the Thorn 8940 is far more common, no Ferguson equivalent!) had a Dolby stereo board in this position. The later versions do, however, give superior recording (on 625 colour), however. The Hitachi VT17-19 (twin speed stereo) were available as Granada VHS AH3 versions, all of which give excellent 405 playback.

Finally, Tyne Tees Television has dropped the new identity "Channel 3 North East". We're Tyne Tees Television again, from March this year!

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## TV OR NOT TV?

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### **Dicky Howett confesses to being slightly injudicious**

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In issue 38 of *405 Alive* I railed against the appearance of inaccurate website television history. It seems that, arguably, I have been guilty myself of the same fault, namely spreading an historical television inaccuracy. Or so it would appear.

My recent article entitled ironically, *Don't Let The Facts Get In The Way*, berated a poor, unfortunate website television historian for re-telling a John Logie Baird 'television story' and treating it as fact. This tale recounts the 1926 Frith Street demonstration – to members of the Royal Institution – at which an elderly scientist got his long white beard caught in the whizzing machinery. I stated that this story was nothing but an amusing fiction. Baird would never have exposed important persons to the dangers of moving parts. It's recorded that Baird had suffered previously, partial disintegration of his 'camera' when spinning components became unglued and rocketed around the lab at high speed.

During the Frith Street demonstration, Baird's entire apparatus was covered by cloths and sheets. The use of such 'protection' would have been essential to Baird, who was fully aware of the competitive 'race' to achieve television and thus would not have exposed his techniques fully to the glare of potential competitors. Also, Baird on this occasion, was using (or so it is alleged) a known image-scanning technique called the flying spot. Albert Abramson in his book, **The History of Television 1888-1941**, mentions Baird's flying spot technique,

"On January 26th 1926, Baird gave a demonstration of his television apparatus to some 40 members of the Royal Institution at his laboratory in Frith Street, Soho. All of Baird's publicity indicated that Baird had invented a super-sensitive photocell, which he kept a secret. No one ever saw his transmitter or his cell. His apparatus was always covered with screens of one sort or another, with the excuse that "extraneous light was not wanted and would interfere with the image." There was even a story that Baird had been experimenting with a cell made of visual purple, which was nonsense. It was also claimed that Baird had invented some "exotic" circuit using a transformer that magically solved his problems. Later it was stated that Baird was very frightened of industrial espionage, but it would be more truthful to indicate that Baird and his financial backers wanted to keep his simple (but most effective) method a secret for as long as possible in order to head off any possible competition. For it was soon realised that the "flying spot system," while patentable, could not be protected."

The above extract is to a degree contradicted by R.W. Burns in his book **British Television – The Formative Years**. The extracts reproduced below clearly *don't* describe a flying spot system. Burns writes,

"Following the demonstration at Frith Street to members of the Royal Institution, arrangements were made for a private demonstration to be given to a Mr E.G. Stewart. Mr Stewart's very interesting report, written in April 1926, only came to light in 1948. Stewart, a perspicacious engineer, was able to describe and give details of the equipment and impressions which were not mentioned by *The Times* reporter.

"The subject, which in the demonstration was limited to a size about 10 inch x 8 inch is brightly illuminated, about 500 candle power being used at one foot distance, and placed before an optical device of revolving lenses which continuously explores the whole surface in 32 vertical bands, each  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch width is thus treated as being uniform.... at the demonstration the received image was one ninth the area of the subject being  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inch x  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inch before magnification."

E.G. Stewart went on to describe the quality of reproduction:

"I found it possible to distinguish between two human faces I had previously seen in the life whilst opening and closing of the mouth, protrusion of the tongue, orientation of the head and passing of the hand over the face could clearly be followed. At the same time it would be very difficult to recognise an individual previously unknown from the television representation. The inventor agreed however that the image was distorted and attributed it to, (1), inferior optical equipment and, (2) to insufficient sub-division of the pictures. He assured me that his lenses now were only lantern condensers and cycle lamp bull's eyes. This would certainly not add clarity to the picture and it would be interesting to see the effect of properly ground and treated lenses."

E.G. Stewart further adds in Burn's book that Baird's equipment was, when giving his early demonstrations '*entirely enclosed except for the input lens*' (*DH italics*). Stewart also wrote: "...he has definitely decided to give a minimum of information upon the details of construction and operation to anyone. In particular the light-sensitive cell which Baird used was a closely guarded secret of the inventor and he told me only sufficient of its construction to demonstrate that it was entirely different from existing cells on the market."

So Baird's apparatus *was* enclosed in sheets although it would appear *not to* conceal a flying spot mechanism. At least not at the time of the visit of Mr. Stewart. Also, as Mr. Stewart confirms, Baird gave only the bare minimum of technical information. Most revealing, it does tend to confirm that a secretive Baird wouldn't have allowed a bunch of scientists to poke around during a live test.

Whom do we believe? Only historian Albert Abramson has suggested that Baird used a 'secret' flying spot system at the 26<sup>th</sup> January demonstration. It's perhaps significant to recall that Baird, six days *before* his 26<sup>th</sup> January demo actually applied for a patent involving the flying spot principle. Also, it might be pertinent at this point to remind ourselves that Baird was a bit of an obscurantist and not exactly the fount of all accuracy. In his autobiography

**Sermons, Soap & Television**, Baird surprisingly mis-dates his momentous Frith Street Royal Institution demonstration as being on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 1926, when demonstrably it was *Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January 1926!* Alfred Dinsdale's contemporaneous book **Television – Seeing by Wireless** also gives the erroneous Friday 27<sup>th</sup> date, as does Sydney Moseley's later biography of Baird. Any wonder that obfuscation exists?

And what about that other old chestnut, the Baird live 'eye-ball' experiment with 'visual purple'? Alfred Dinsdale in his 1928 book **Television** attempts to elucidate,

"The early television experimenters endeavoured to construct artificial eyes by substituting selenium for visual purple and building an artificial retina out of a mosaic of selenium cells, each of these cells being connected by wires to a shutter. For every selenium cell used there was a shutter, and each shutter was arranged to open when light fell upon the particular cell connected to it. As each shutter opened it allowed a spot of light to fall upon a screen at the receiving end of the circuit. In this way each selenium cell controlled a spot of light, the image being produced by a mosaic formed of these spots. Apparatus modelled on these lines was actually made by several inventors. Rignoux and Fournier, two French scientists, constructed such a machine in 1906. This apparatus was intended only to demonstrate the principle."

So that explains it. Will we ever know exactly what 'visual purple' was? Will we ever know if John Logie Baird suddenly became Dr Frankenstein and actually sliced that eyeball? And finally, did all those years ago, an elderly scientist go into the record books as being the first man to get his whiskers trimmed by the magic of television? One thing is definite. We know that television was 'invented' on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January in Frith Street....or was it Friday 27<sup>th</sup>? Or perhaps... .

BBC Television once broadcast an historical series called *You Are There*. If only *that* were really possible!

Dicky Howett, Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August (true)

*Sources of erudition:*

**British Television-The Formative Years**. R.W.Burns, 1986.

**Television**. Francis Wheen, 1985.

**Television - An International History**. Ed. Anthony Smith, 1995.

**Television - Seeing by Wireless**. Alfred Dinsdale, 1926.

**Television**. Alfred Dinsdale, 1928.

**The Secret Life of John Logie Baird**. Tom McArthur and Peter Waddell, 1986.

**John Baird**. Sydney Moseley, 1951.

**Tube-The Invention of Television**. David Fisher and Marshall John Fisher, 1996.



As a footnote to the indelicate subject of the eyeball, this is what Baird himself wrote in his autobiography (readers of a sensitive or nervous disposition look away):

As soon as I was given the eye, I hurried in a taxicab to the laboratory. Within a few minutes I had the eye in the machine. Then I turned on the current and the waves carrying television were broadcast from the aerial. The essential image for television passed through the eye within half an hour after the operation. On the following day the sensitiveness of the eye's visual nerve was gone. The optic was dead. I had been dissatisfied with the old-fashioned selenium cell and lens. I felt that television demanded something more refined. The most sensitive optical substance known is the nerve of the human eye... I had to wait a long time to get the eye because unimpaired ones are not often removed by surgeons... Nothing was gained from the experiment. It was gruesome and a waste of time."

Visual purple, by the way, is a pigment found in the 'rods' of the eyes, which actually detect the photons of light falling on them. This pigment is necessary for proper night vision. According to James Murden in **Observer's Guide to Halley's Comet**, "[If you] remain in darkness for a few minutes a minor miracle happens; a sensitising secretion known as *visual purple* coats the retina (the screen at the back of the eye, where the image is formed) and renders it hundreds of times as sensitive as it is in normal bright conditions."

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## THE FIRST (BBC HIGH-DEFINITION) OUTSIDE BROADCAST

**Andrew R. Henderson**

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An often quoted television remark concerns the idea that the earliest Television signals have now reached far out into the Universe and that somewhere these faint primitive waves could be being received by another intelligence. I'm sure all of us have wished at some point we could see the earliest television pictures as if we were there at the time. Sadly time has passed and we have no video recordings of the first 405-line pictures from Alexandra Palace. It is difficult to even comprehend what they looked like.

Thinking along these lines I pinpointed the first Outside Broadcast as the event I would most have liked to see. There are no photographs of the event, no off screen stills and not even some film. An impossible dream? Perhaps not.

Although the first official OB was a two-minute sequence on 5th September 1936. It featured the comedian Leonard Henry leaving Alexandra Palace in his car. This was developed from earlier studio experimental work that had included setting up an Emitron on the balcony outside the studio and pointing the camera over to the local gasworks. The shot was used many times

in the next three years to cover intervals between programmes. Often a train would appear as the shot also covered the LNER tracks too.

A few years ago I took a video camera up to Alexandra Palace to take some colour and monochrome filtered footage. After a good number of shots I found myself on the same balcony from sixty years ago. Having set up the tripod I panned the camera down from the transmitter mast to the park on the right. Through the monochrome viewfinder I suddenly realised that I was looking with modern eyes in that same shot more than a half century later. With better framing you could see the railway line, the gasworks and the trees of the park. Even taking into account the growth of the trees I realised that I was looking at the same view through a camera which was a direct descendant of the Emitron.

Now with some adjustments to the video image recorded on tape you can see that same view in its original ratio. I've tried to optically and electronically reproduce the quality of picture seen through the Emitron. The cameras were red-sensitive, which makes the trees look rather strange. The gasworks and the railway line are visible.

I can't pretend that with the passage of years that this is the most accurate reconstruction possible, but at the very least it brings out that wonderful feeling of seeing something that no-one has seen for a very long time. We can't travel back in time, but we can relive one of the unseen ghosts of television past.



**Remaking television history—in a way!**

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## DADS' ARMY—HOW WE LAUGHED!

***A comment or two from our tv critic, Dicky Howett***

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During 1968, an unprepossessing tv comedy series called *Dads' Army* hit the 405-line black and white screens. Initially it was thought that Perry and Crofts' original premise – using the Home Guard for comedy – might backfire and cause offence. Fortunately, this wasn't the case, and *Dads' Army* soon became one of British television's most popular and enduring comedy series. Thirty years later, as an anniversary treat, BBC2 repeated the first six telerecorded episodes.

Unfortunately the technical quality of those six telerecordings hasn't travelled well. They clearly demonstrate that the optimum recording quality relied totally on the ability of the video engineer. In particular, episode two demonstrated that BBC Television, if they put their minds to it, could produce some of the world's *worst* telerecordings. These recordings displayed numerous faults, not helped in one episode by a couple of studio cameras that had mis-matched gamma plus beam focus problems (even I can do better with my ancient EM1 203!).

But that's an historical technical gripe. What do we find today? Well, the dreaded 'tv improvers' are at it again! It's so *easy* to fiddle, isn't it chaps? It must have been a great strain on the management not to 'colourise' *Dads' Army* and bring it 'up to date'. The next best thing? Let's 'enhance' the studio laughter! Oh yes indeed, just listen to the 'improved' guffaws and the tweaked titters. The laughter's been 'sweetened', just as on any other current comedy show, which is perhaps symptomatic of the state of current British television comedy. But then *Dads' Army* isn't or wasn't like any other comedy show. It was an original, and you mess with originality at your peril. Take the 'improved' laughter track on all six repeated episodes. It's a sloppy job. The difference is audibly apparent. The added laughter is 1990s hi-fi NICAM and doesn't blend too well with a 1960s television optical sound track. By comparison, I have a recording made a few years ago off-air of the first *Dads' Army* where the original sound track was mercifully untouched. On that recording is interesting to note that, although the 1968 studio audience laughed in the right places, it wasn't a laughter generated of familiarity, ("They don't like it up 'em", "May I be excused, Captain Mainwaring?", "Just testing, Wilson", "You stupid boy") but more a slightly puzzled, dutiful laughter from an audience not sure what to expect, or how to react. But then that's the charm and education of old recordings. They are time-capsules. Modern fiddling always detracts and diminishes.

### ADVANCE NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING AUCTION

The Radiophile has received instructions to sell another large quantity of vintage radio and television receivers and miscellaneous equipment, the sale to be held in mid-November. Further details will be available early in that month from the Admin Office.

## WRIGHT'S REPLAY

### Jeff Wright tests your memory

#### The Braden Beat

Bernard Braden described *On The Braden Beat* as a “personal newspaper column of the air”. The programme changed the late night viewing habits in the mid sixties. About ninety per cent of TV sets were switched off by 11 o'clock when Braden began in September 1962 but by the end of the first run, seventy per cent were switched *on* to the quirky topical mix. Sales of cocoa plummeted.

A typical set of targets in the running order of the twenty minute show consisted of insurance agents, Hitler, the state of the pound and Sir Alec Douglas-Home's TV image. Viewers liked his victories over “city hall”, in the process pricking egos with wit and humour. He fought the system as a consumer journalist before we knew what that meant. In taking up the fight against vested interests, bureaucracy and petty



*Bernard Braden actually  
on the beat in search of material  
for his show*

officialdom, Braden had run-ins with, for instance MI5, the Coastguard Service, doctors and lawyers, and he also received several slaps on the wrist from the ITA. Braden had a rare talent, the ability to mix the funny with the serious without losing the impact of each. Braden and his team were adept at picking up and reflecting the worries, grouses and annoyances that surround us. It was a skill inherited by one of his researchers Esther Rantzen. The show won the BAFTA of its day and earned Braden the title of Personality of the Year in 1965.

#### First commercials

At 8.12 on the night of September 22 1955, Jack Jackson, the host of *Variety*, ITV's first show on that first night, said: “...and here's the moment you have all been waiting for”. Yes, it was the end of part one or the “natural break” as they called it in those days. A Gibbs SR toothpaste ad was the first commercial which ran for a minute and a half; its producer called it “an illustrated lecture”. The next day the critics gave their judgements



"I feel neither depraved or uplifted... I've already forgotten the name of the toothpaste", said *The Manchester Guardian*. *The Times* called them "Comic little interruptions" whilst *The Daily Worker* headline said: "Too Much Marge and Toothpaste". *The Observer* opined that there wasn't enough vulgarity and attack in the ads, but a visiting critic from *The New York Times* said the commercials were "a paragon of British understatement and restraint".

On the opening night only about 170,000 television sets were equipped to pick up ITV in the London area. Of those about 100,000 tuned to ITV, a quarter of viewers stayed loyal to the BBC and 11 per cent didn't even switch on. The ITV audience was far smaller than had been hoped for by -- and promised to -- the advertisers, who had paid a fifty per cent premium to appear on that first night. They were charged about £1,500 a minute. Demand was so strong to secure one of the 23 slots available that a ballot was held and Gibbs SR was picked out of the hat to be the first shown. There's a familiar ring to some of the products advertised, such as Cadbury's Drinking Chocolate, Dunlop tyres, *Woman* magazine, Lux, Surf, For, but Crompton's light bulbs, Summer County Margarine and Ekco TVs and radios are no longer made.

Commercial breaks, or "natural breaks" as they used to be called, were severely governed. No religion, no politics and good taste at all times were decreed and two committees vetted ads in script and finished form.. For instance, there was a debate in 1956 as to whether toilet rolls should only be seen wrapped rather than running free. Natural breaks --the term "natural" was never tested or defined-- were restricted to six minutes per hour and to avoid any subconscious thoughts of linkage, sponsorship or endorsement there had to be at least two minutes between any state occasion, church service, formal royal ceremony or any. appearance by the royal family (wrapped or running free) and any advertisement.

In 1961 a poll asked housewives: "What do you do when the ads come on?" 30% said knitting sewing or darning, 23% watched the screen and the rest did household chores. What the husbands did isn't recorded. They were probably down the pub. A more recent poll found that 50% watched, 20% went to the bathroom and the rest to the kitchen. People must have had much stronger bladders in 1961.

Advertisers could also sell their wares in "Ad Mags", advertising magazines, shoppers guides or advertising documentaries, as the decorous ITA called them. Each area had its mag which featured cod stores, shops, showrooms and even a pub in which TV personalities offered new lines in kipper fillets to the viewing masses. They were popular with the viewers and popular with smaller regional advertisers who couldn't afford normal ad rates, but once again the sniffy legislators decided what was best for us. The poor viewer might find endorsement of products within programmes confusing, so a popular strand died in 1963.

**Natural Break - the programme will continue on the next page**

## Danger Man

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> September 1960

Time: 7.30pm

Place: ITV

Name: John Drake, Danger Man

Location: Boreham Wood.

*Danger Man*, starring Patrick McGoohan, was Bond before Bond -- it wasn't until '62 that Dr No came to the cinema screen. McGoohan turned down the role of Bond and the rest - and Sean Connery - is history. In the vein of *Dick Barton*, *Callan*, *Jason King*, *John Steed* and *The Saint*, Drake roved the free world saving mankind -- and Harold Macmillan -- from dark forces, evildoers, mad scientists and common or garden power-crazed megalomaniacs, saving a dame in distress each week along the way. A line-up of sixties' British screen pulchritude played girls with exotic backgrounds - a bevy of Francescas, Melinas, Marias, Lisas and Veronicas with not an Ethel in sight. All were saved from a fate worse than death on screen, although what happened in Boreham Wood later we can only guess at.



*Anglo-American Patrick McGoohan,  
born in New York, raised in Britain*

Patrick McGoohan was chosen for the part after ATV saw him in a television play, *The Greatest Man In The World*. He had been voted TV Actor of the Year in 1959. Seventy-one adventures were made and shown over the next eight years, and repeated and repeated here and around the world. Foreign locations -- Paris today, New York tomorrow -- gave the series a glamorous jet-set feel, doubtless designed to enhance its foreign sales potential. . . It certainly worked, for by 1962 *Danger Man*

could be watched from Finland to New Zealand, via Algeria, Iran and Thailand and many other stops along the way. Its first showing in the USA saw it top the ratings, although it had failed to make an impact with viewers in the UK in its first outing. That first episode, sub-titled *A View From the Villa*, was set in Italy but had its exteriors filmed at Portmeirion in Wales. Seven years later the same place was the setting for McGoohan's cult hit *The Prisoner*, but that's another story.

"Danger Man was no ordinary man," ran the publicity material for the launch. "He is fast moving, intelligent, powerful and completely independent. He works alone, a man of the world. An international sportsman and crackshot, when required he shoots to kill.. His attitude towards the feminine sex is guarded. He is not afraid of women, but he is afraid of falling in love". The Swinging Sixties? The critics, however, were a little unkind. *Television Today* said: "Patrick McGoohan came over as a handsome exciting lead, but the characters were cardboard, the direction jerky and bitty, the script banal: why pick a bad one to start the series?" afraid of women, but he is afraid of falling in love". The Swinging Sixties? The critics, however, were a little unkind. *Television Today* said: "Patrick McGoohan came over as a handsome exciting lead, but the characters were cardboard, the direction jerky and bitty, the script banal: why pick a bad one to start the series?"

### **Order, Order...**

On 19 January, 1972 Christopher Chataway, the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, announced in Parliament that he would no longer exercise his powers under section 17 of the Television Act 1964. Did he know that this would mean *Lunchtime With Wogan*? What he was announcing was the end of Government controls on the hours that television was allowed to broadcast, which meant a cascade of new programmes; probably not since the launch of ITV in 1955 had so many new shows hit the screens in one week. "Nineteen new shows and twenty more hours of viewing time for housewives, children, pensioners, the sick, disabled and shift workers", said the *TV Times*. The whole mix of television was there; news and current affairs soaps, quizzes, music, comedy, films, a cornucopia of telly goodies and *Lunch Time With Wogan*. On Monday there were:

*Rainbow*

*Larry The Lamb*

*First Report*

*Mr and Mrs*

*Emmerdale Farm*

Tuesday and the rest of the week saw:

*The Magic Ball*

*Lunchtime With Wogan*

*Harriet's Back In Town*

*About Britain*

*Rupert Bear*

*Scotch Corner*

*Crown Court*

*Looks Familiar*

*Diane's Panda Party*

*Jokers Wild*

*General Hospital*

*Happy House*

*Melody Inn*

*The Galloping Gourmet.*

26 years on, how many of these are still around?

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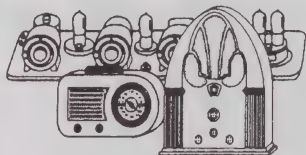
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## 'ON THE AIR'

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# THE TEST CARD CIRCLE

This society was founded in 1989 with fewer than twenty members. Since then it has grown in membership to well over one hundred, and has certainly grown in stature. The various broadcasting authorities acknowledge the wealth of information and expertise possessed by the membership, and regularly refer inquiries direct to the society.

All aspects of television trade test transmissions are included within the interests of The Circle: Test Cards and patterns, accompanying music, slides and still pictures, Service Information bulletins, Trade Test Colour Films, and, of course, the dear old BBC Demonstration Film.

A quarterly 48-page magazine is issued which contains lively and interesting articles on all of these topics. Each spring, a convention is held in the little market town of Leominster, where members can meet for a delightful weekend of wonderful music and pictures, good companionship, and pure nostalgia. It is also a great deal of fun.

If you are interested in this fascinating subject, write to the Secretary, Curtons House, School Lane, Walpole St Peter, WISBECH, PE14 7PA, and if you send a 12.5" x 9" self addressed envelope with a 50 pence stamp, we will be pleased to send you a sample copy of the Circle's magazine.

## ASK YOURSELF THREE QUESTIONS...

1. Bored with the same old dreary, overpriced merchandise at collectors' fairs and antique marts?

2. Do you collect any of these?

Stamps and Postal History  
Picture Postcards  
Cigarette and Phone Cards  
Cameras and Photography items  
Coins and Banknotes  
Military, Naval and Aviation items  
Pop, Stage and Screen memorabilia  
Autographs  
Things to do with Sport and Transport  
Old Toys  
Ephemera, Documents and Prints  
Books  
The weirdest kind of Collector's Items

3. Would you like to be offered a selection regularly, often at less than dealers' prices?

Yes? Then it's time you got in on the secret and discovered DALKEITH AUCTIONS, an established company in Bournemouth who hold auctions of all these items every month and issue detailed 56-page catalogues in advance. Can't get down to Bournemouth? No problem! Just fill in the bid form and send an open cheque or give us your credit card number. You set an upper limit for your bid and we don't abuse your trust (proprietor is a 405 Aliver!). The system does work! Contact us too if you wish to sell items to a broad range of interested and motivated people.

Enquiries to Philip Howard on 01202-292905. The catalogue of the next auction costs £2 (annual subscription by post £22) but you can phone or write for your first copy FREE.

**DALKEITH AUCTIONS, Dalkeith Hall,  
81 Old Christchurch Road, BOURNEMOUTH, BH1 1YL**

# ANTIQUE RADIO MAGAZINE

BIMESTRALE DI RADIO D' EPOCA E DINTORNI

Antique Radio Magazine is a bi-monthly magazine dedicated to the vintage radios and surroundings, published by Mose' Edizioni.

The magazine, lavishly and beautifully printed in art book style, is now entering into the 4th year of life and despite it is mainly addressed to specialised people, it is gaining more and more success world-wide. Articles go from the beginnings of telecommunications until the radio as element of history of customs and culture.

Our aim is to make the wide public aware of this fascinating world which has now become of great interest.

An important landmark was our recent publication of the important book named "Epoepa della radio, storia di un uomo".

We also offer a comprehensive selection of radio books from other European publishers, many of which are hard to find elsewhere. Please ask for our latest Ex Libris catalogue.

I look forward to serving you.

Yours Truly

Mose' Battocchio, Editor

For more information or orders please write or telephone Mose' Edizioni, Via Bosco 4, 31010 Maser (TV) Italy - Tel. 00 39 423-950385; Fax 00 39 423-529049; e-mail: [mose@tv.shineline.it](mailto:mose@tv.shineline.it)

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**All enquiries to: NVCF, Spice House, 13 Belmont Road,  
Exeter, Devon EX1 2HF. Telephone: (01392) 411565.  
e.mail sunpress@eurobell.co.uk**

***Please note that the NEC is now charging for car parking***

NB: You do not have to be a dealer to have a stall at the fair.  
Collectors with surplus items to sell are just as welcome too.  
For a **BOOKING FORM**, please contact the above address

## **A Notice to all Dinosaur Customers**

We recently realised that it's a little over five years since we supplied the first Dinosaur standards converter – this realisation came as a shock to us. What started out as an occasional hobby has grown into something approaching a small business. I can now look back on over fifty standards converters and nearly a hundred modulators and wonder where the time went!

We also look at our collections of early radios and televisions gathering dust for want of attention. Something has to give, and so it is with a heavy heart that we must announce that at least for the time being Dinosaur is closing its doors to new business. This need not be a permanent closure; watch this space for future developments.

In the meantime there are still a few 'Testcard 'U' Like' generators left for sale including the new full colour testcard 'F' generator (available for the ridiculously low price of £160 plus £3 P&P) so get your orders in now. We are (naturally) still open for spares, service and of course extra images for the testcard generators.

We would like to thank all of our customers, many of whom we've come to know and consider as friends – without your encouragement 'Dinosaur' would not have been possible.

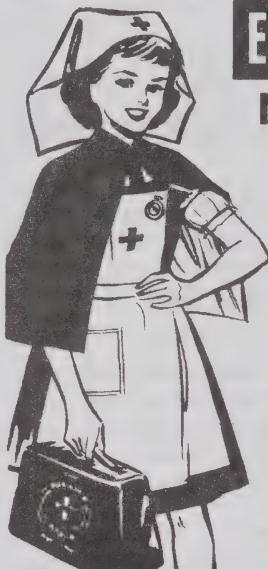
**Dave Grant & Mike Izycky**  
**Dinosaur Designs, 4 Kemble Drive, Bromley, Kent, BR2 8PZ.**

AS SEEN ON T.V.

OFFICIAL

## EMERGENCY WARD 10

### NURSES UNIFORM

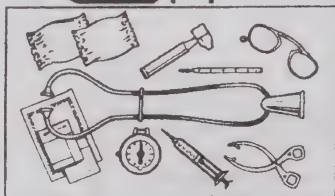


A delightful gift for any girl. Smart blue silk taffeta dress, tie-on head-dress and pinafore, separate cuffs, beautiful blue rayon cape lined with crimson art silk. Toy instrument kit includes stethoscope, hypodermic, forceps, thermometer, fob stop-watch, octascope, spectacles, and Ward 10 Nursing certificate. In black plastic case.

**YOURS  
FOR DEP  
5/-**

**& 5 insts,  
at 5/-**

Length: 26"—32". 4—9 yrs.  
(state size).



**CASH 24/11** + 1/7 post & pkg. or C.O.D.

Cheaper model includes: dress, cape, apron and head - dress.

15/11 plus 1/1 p/p.

Send 6d. for Christmas Colour Catalogue.

**MONTROSE PRODUCTS (TVXI)**

**623/7 HOLLOWAY ROAD, LONDON, N.19**

Happy days! But what's an octascope? I know what a monoscope is but an octascope...

# **ELECTRONIC CLASSICS: COLLECTING, RESTORATION & REPAIR**

*If collecting and restoring old radios (or TVs, telephones or hi-fi amplifiers) is your hobby AND you think others have more fun, more luck, then this book is for you. It's the most comprehensive book ever published on the subject, with no padding, no repetition of what's already in other books. This book starts where the others leave off.*

**Only this book reveals secrets such as...**

Can broken valves be mended?

Now that obsolete ICs are more difficult to find than valves, where do you get all those hard-to-find parts?

Can noisy volume controls be silenced permanently (without using a big hammer)?

How do you finish off apparatus to museum display standards?

Are fakes easy to spot?

Can you really destroy an item's value by crummy restoration? (You bet you can!)

Why do some collectors have all the luck and what's their secret?

How do you tell the rogues in this hobby and what remedy do you have against them?

Where do people get archive programme material?

Is it worth joining a society and if so, which one?

Can you really make a living out of your hobby?

Are there easy ways of restoring old sets?

Which books and materials do you need?

How can YOU score repeatedly at auctions and antique fairs?

How come the dealers always get hold of the tastiest stock?

... and this book doesn't mince words!

**This book will encourage you in your hobby and build up your confidence at tackling those restoration tasks yourself – and save you a fortune in the process.**

*Published by Newnes at £19.99 and available through all good bookshops.*



# Treasures in Transition

This is the area for buying and selling all kinds of things to do with television, new or old. Want to join in? Then send us your advertisement: there is no charge, although if space is short we may have to 'prune' out the least relevant adverts or hold them over until next time.

## WHAT'S IN AND WHAT'S OUT

These advertisements are primarily for private sales but traders are also welcome. The Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires people who are commercial dealers to make this fact clear in their advertisements. The letter (T) at the end of an advertisement indicates that the advertisement is trade' and (NS) that the advertisement has been placed by a non-subscriber. Any job advertisements are bound by the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975 and the Age Discrimination Act, 2098.

Test card music and old TV programmes are subject to the same rules of copyright as other recorded works and it is unlawful to *sell* amateur or professional recordings of same. Swapping same for no gain is possibly not illegal but 405 *Alive* does not want to test the law on this subject so we will only accept advertisements from people who will indemnify us in this respect.

## PLUGS NEEDED

If you are selling any electrical appliance without a plug on it, you are breaking the law. Domestic electrical appliances manufactured in or imported to the UK must be fitted with a correctly fused 13-amp plug. We suggest that our kind of antique treasures are labelled "Collector's item, not to be connected to the mains without examination by a competent electrician" or something similar.

## IMPORTANT DISCLAIMERS

1. Whilst care is taken to establish the *bona fides* of advertisers, readers are strongly recommended to take their own precaution before parting with money in response to an advertisement. We do not accept any responsibility for dealings resulting from these advertisements, which are published in good faith. That said, we will endeavour to deal sympathetically and effectively with any difficulties but at our discretion. Fortunately we have had no problems yet. In related collecting fields, replicas and reproductions have proven to be difficult to identify, so beware of any items 'of doubtful origin' and assure yourself of the authenticity of anything you propose buying. And try to have fun; after all, it's only a hobby!

2. Much of the equipment offered for sale or exchange does not conform to present-day safety and electric standards. Some items may even be lethal in the hands of the inexperienced. This magazine takes no responsibility for these aspects and asks readers to take their own precautions.

**STANDARDS CONVERTERS.** Building your own is not a realistic proposition unless you already have seriously advanced design and construction facilities. It's not a task for amateurs, not even for gifted ones. Many of the parts needed are available only from professional sources and not in one-off quantities, whilst some previous designs for converters can no longer be copied because the custom chips are no longer made. Unfortunately the production of these marvellous devices has now ceased. Note also our two advertisements in this section for a conversion service.

**MODULATORS.** Two designs for modulators have been published in *Television* magazine but we don't recommend either today. One uses hard-to-find components, whilst the other one is good but requires you to make your own printed circuit board and wind your own coils very accurately. There was an excellent ready-built modulator from Dinosaur Designs but production has ceased until further notice.

**COMPONENTS.** Here is a brief list of suppliers; you can have a much extended two-page list by asking for FAQ SHEET 3 and sending one first-class stamp loose plus a SAE to the editorial address. Most valves and other components are not hard to find: we can mention Billington Export (01403-784961, £50 minimum order), Colomor Ltd (01403-786559), Kenzen (0121-446 4346), Wilson Valves (01484-654650, 420774), Sound Systems of Suffolk (01473-721493) and PM Components (01474-560521). A good non-commercial supplier of hard-to-find types is Phil Taylor, 3 Silver Lane, Billingshurst, Sussex, RH14 0RP. For hard-to-find transistors we have heard of – but phone numbers may have changed – AQL Technology (01252-341711), The Semiconductor Archives (0181-691 7908), Vectis Components Ltd. (01705-669885) and Universal Semiconductor Devices Ltd. (01494- 791289). NB: Several of these firms have minimum order levels of between £10 and £20. For American books on old radio and TV, also all manner of spares, try Antique Radio Supply, (phone 00 1-602-820 5411, fax 00 1-602 820 4643). Their mail order service is first-class and they have a beautiful free colour catalogue (or is it color catalog?). Would you like to recommend other firms? If you think a firm gives good service please tell us all!

**SERVICE DATA.** The Radiophile, publisher of *405 Alive*, has a huge library of service information which is available to readers at very reasonable prices. Please address your requirements to *Graham* at the Admin. Office, *The Radiophile*, Larkhill, Newport Road, Woodseaves, STAFFORD, ST20 0NP or fax them to 01785-284696. The following firms are also noted, and don't forget the annual volumes TV & Radio Servicing at the public library.

Mr Bentley, 27 De Vere Gardens, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3EB (0181-554 6631). Thousands of technical manuals and service sheets.

Alton Bowman, 4172 East Avenue, Canadagua, NY 14424-9564, USA. Schematics for all USA radio, TV, organ, etc. equipment 1920-1970.

Mauritron Technical Services, 47a High Street, Chinnor, Oxon., OX9 4DJ (01844-351694, fax 01844-352554). Photocopies of old service sheets, other technical data.

Savoy Hill Publications, 50 Meddon Street, Bideford, Devon, EX39 2EQ (01237-424280). Large library of service data for photocopying.

Technical Information Services, 76 Church Street, Larkhall, Lanarks., ML9 1HF (01698-883344/888343, fax 01698-884825), 'World's largest selection of manuals, 1930s to current date, British and foreign'.

In addition, 405 Aliver Bernard Mothersill has offered to photocopy (at cost) items from his own extensive collection of service sheets for 1950s and 60s TV sets. There are dozens and dozens, mainly Alba, Ekco, Bush, Ferguson/Thorn, GEC, Murphy, Perdio, Pilot, also a few Decca, Defiant, HMV, KB, McMichael, Peto Scott, Philco, Regentone and Ultra. Write with international reply coupon plus unstamped self-addressed envelope to him at 3 Cherrywood Close, Clonsilla, Dublin 15, Eire.

#### HOW TO WRITE CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS THAT WORK

1. Start by mentioning the product or service you are selling or want. By doing so, you make it easier for the reader.
2. Always include the price. Research has shown that 52 per cent of people who read classified ads will not respond to ads that fail to mention a price.
3. Keep abbreviations to a minimum. Will the reader know what a NB207 is? If it's a 12-inch table model TV from 1956, say so!
4. Put yourself in the position of the reader. Is all the information included?

NOTE: Thanks to referrals and mentions in the press we are now receiving a fair proportion of advertisements of sets for sale from members of the public. We print their descriptions in good faith but their descriptions may not be as accurate or as well-informed as those made by, say, a keen and knowledgeable enthusiast.

A PLEA! When sending in your advertisement please do put a date on it. We don't normally type in your advertisement on the day received and instead all small ads go into a file ready for typing later. But what happens then if I come across three undated ads all from the same person and one of them says 'This is my new ad, please cancel previous ones'? It does happen, so please be kind enough to date your ad.

#### IS IT VALUE FOR MONEY?

It's unwise to pay too much but it's also unwise to pay too little.

When you pay too much, you lose a little money, that is all. When you pay too little, you sometimes lose everything because the thing you bought was incapable of doing the thing you bought it to do.

The common law of business balance prohibits paying a little and getting a lot. It can't be done. If you deal with the lowest bidder, it's well to set aside something for the risk you run. And if you do that, you will have enough to pay for something better.

*Attributed to John Ruskin, 1819-1900.*

#### REPAIRS

"We do three kinds of job – quick, cheap and good. You can have any two of the three. You can have a good, quick job but it won't be cheap. You can have a good, cheap job but it won't be quick. And you could ask us to do a quick, cheap job but it wouldn't be any good."

*Adapted from a repair shop sign in Canada, reported in The Guardian and submitted by Mark Brailsford.*

#### CONVERSION SERVICES:

N1500 and N1700 tapes converted to VHS or U-Matic free of charge (I can

also convert them to 405-line in the process if you require). Please send a blank VHS or U-Matic tape, your original N1500 / N1700 tape and an adequately stamped addressed Jiffy bag to Mike Bennett G7TRF, 3 High View Gardens, Exmouth, Devon. EX8 2JR. Phone: 01395-279732 or e-mail nldb2@permanent.co.uk

I will convert your 625-line tapes to broadcast-standard 405 lines on my digital line-store standards converter. Free of charge to subscribers of *405 Alive*. Please send blank tape (VHS only) for output and return postage. Input tapes can be accepted on Philips 1700, EIAJ, Video2000, Beta or VHS. David Looser, Maristow, Holbrook Road, Harkstead, IPSWICH, Suffolk, IP9 1BP. Phone 01473-328649.

*(Publisher's note: These offers are most generous and users may care to send a free-will donation towards costs as well. There may be a delay in handling conversions if many people take up these offers.)*

**FOR SALE:** Three choice tellies from the 1950s. Bush 10" wood case (TV24, the more stylish variant of the TV22). Pye VT4 12", with amethyst-tinted screen filter. Another one, without the filter (clear screen). All clean and ungot at, £150 the three together. Sets are in deepest Kent; ask for John on 01892-891175 (NS).

**FOR SALE,** (due to lack of space): MARCONIPHONE VT161, 16 inch table model, slight scratches to cabinet, but works O.K. (R.F. gain is a bit low) £20 o.n.o.

MURPHY V250 table model, "as found" condition but is complete, cabinet not bad £20 o.n.o.

UNIVERSUM SK992 , 7 inch, late 60's VHF/UHF mini T.V. good raster and radio O.K. but no video signal hence £15 o.n.o. (Schematic included- quite small may be able to parcel post?)

GE.C. 10 inch table set, wooden cabinet (model no. not known) a bit like the BT5144 of 1950 vintage, but may be earlier. Probably post-war but does look like a pre-war design? £30 o.n.o. (This may be a rarity I honestly don't know- give me a phone and I will do my best to describe it).

ADMIRAL, 5 inch, 525 line, American table model in bakelite case, mains transformer replaced with 240v unit- so safe to plug in, but needs more electrical repairs to finish, this is rare so is £70 a fair price? (open to offers of course)

EY51 valves - I have a box full of new EY51s still in their cartons- £3 each plus postage if anyone wants one. I've also got a pile of new colour line output valves PD 510s and such like- FREE to good home!

SONY VP2031 U-Matic player, mint condition works fine (a very efficient door-stop! boat anchor) FREE to good home, if no takers this is going to the tip (if I can pick it up!).

And finally the "offer you can't refuse": if any 405 Alive reader can find me an English Electric T40 or similar model (see Radio and T.V. servicing volume IV page 312) they can have ALL of the above (Apart from the Admiral) in exchange- is that a good deal? or I will pay cash for the T40. Call any time, Rob Walsh 0161-428 6269 (Cheshire).



**FOR SALE:** Marconi combined radio and TV, model VRC54DA, with bakelite tube surround. Please ring Doug Bunt on 01753-885538 (Bucks.).

**FOR SALE:** Does your carefully restored vintage wireless look somehow incomplete? Want to impress your cultured friends? Then buy one of my genuine BBC opera libretto booklets to strew casually across the top of your set! Genuine British Broadcasting *Company* issues (1926) £2 each (only two left, will supply later issue along with 50p refund if sold out), Corporation issues (1927/8) £1.50 each. Prices are post-paid inland. Andrew Emmerson, 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH.

**BOOK FOR SALE:** Closed-Circuit Television Single-Handed, by Tony Gibson Pitman, 1972, 144-page hardback. Ex-library copy. Nothing special but useful pix of cameras, microphones and open-reel VTRs. Bargain at £1 plus 80p p&p. Ring first to check unsold. Andy Emmerson, 01604-844130.

**FOR SALE:** Camcorder accessories: Realistic-brand tie-clip microphone (model 33-1058), all as new. Hoya lens parts, all for 52mm fitting: multivision prismatic thingy (for rotating multiple images), plus filters for soft-spot, fog effect, colourburst, starburst, x4 neutral density and graduated grey. Cost fortunes but £22 the lot, post-paid. Ring first to check unsold. Andy Emmerson, 01604-844130.

**FOR SALE: RCA system video discs.** Jon Bird has come across 14 of these, which might make someone happy. They are not laser discs of course but made for the obsolete RCA CED system (625 lines PAL). Please contact Jon Bird in the Grand Duchy of Whitstable, 01227-273952 (NS).

**FOR SALE:** GIRL FILM & TELEVISION ANNUAL No 1. 1957. 1st edition of this attractive tv & movie series. No d/w. **£3.** BBCTV PRESENTS. A Fiftieth anniversary celebration. Nicholas Moss.1986. Lavish glossy picture book of BBCTV history. **£5.** TECHNIQUES OF TELEVISION PRODUCTION. Rudy Bretz. McGraw-Hill. 1953. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Swimming in tv production pictures/studios/cameras/ob vans/transmitters/you name it! No d/w. **£8.** TELEVISION PRODUCTION HANDBOOK. Herbert Zettl. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1968. This American book on tv is absolutely dripping with pictures of cameras, pedestals, lenses, microphones, vt machines. 541 pp. Virtually mint interior. No d/w. **£8** INDEPENDENT TELEVISION ENGINEERING FOR COLOUR Pat Hawker 1970. Well illustrated ITA technical publication showing ITV colour tv development. Scarce. **£8** SEE IT HAPPEN. Making of ITN. G.COX.. Fascinating account of the start of ITN. Illustrated. d/w. **£5** All items in VGC. Postage minimum **£1.** Contact Dicky Howett 01245-441811, e-mail: [Dicky.Howett@btinternet.com](mailto:Dicky.Howett@btinternet.com)

**FOR SALE:** large list of scarce radio, television and film books from the 1930s onwards—send SAE to get your copy. Various issues of *Radio Times* from 1927-1935 at £6 each. Roger Godden, 50 Barton Hill Drive, Minster-on-Sea, Sheerness, ME12 3NE. Exhibiting at the 9.5mm Chiswick Film Fair, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October from 12 noon (Town Hall, Turnham Green, London W4).

**FOR DISPOSAL:** 200-300 TV valves; presumably free but ring up to find out. M.E. Clark, Luton 01582-728488 daytime (NS).

**FREE TO GOOD HOME:** Ekco 405-line TV, 17-inch 13-channel table model, type T370. Good external condition, worked fine when last used 30 years ago. Shame to destroy it. Tom Morgan, Gloucester 01452-422726 evenings and weekends (NS).

**FOR DISPOSAL:** The idea is that these items should not go to the tip but some pocket money in return would not be turned down. Peto Scott 1715T 17-inch table model TV/FM radio (ITV conversion). Good working order with virtually brand-new CRT fitted circa 1984, with service manual and notes on alterations. Vidor 4209 12-inch console TV ("rather good looking, sloping forward cabinet), also converted for ITV and FM radio, with service manual. Has good CRT but LOPT is burnt-out; radio still works. Many spare valves from the 1950s/60s, some new in box (Tungsram). Various miscellaneous components; collection of new resistors and capacitors (Philips service kit), plus a Grundig 809 tape recorder, not working but ideal for spares. Vendor was service engineer during the 1950s/60s. Large number of radio and TV service sheets from trade magazines. Mr S. Porter, Matlock, Derbyshire, tele: 01629-822727 (NS).

**FOR DISPOSAL, SOME FREE TO GOOD HOME:** some excellent CRTs as follows. One MW31-74, 12" round, new. One unknown 14" round, used but good. Three MW36-24 14" rectangular, new. Two AW43-70 17" rectangular, re-gun. One CRM73 17" rectangular, re-gun. Modest 'donation' requested for the above tubes.

Seven unknown 17" rectangular re-guns, all about the 1960-1970 era, these ones free to good home. J. Rudrum, Eastbourne (01323-729440) (NS).

**WANTED:** Part Two LINK 110 handbook. Also IKEGAMI 79D camera parts. Especially needed, power leads, batteries. Sync, DTL and coder boards. Working surveillance unit for LDK5 camera. Contact Dicky Howett 01245-441811, e-mail [Dicky.Howett@btinternet.com](mailto:Dicky.Howett@btinternet.com)

**WANTED:** any episode on video of Oliver Postgate/Peter Firmin's SmallFilms: *Sara & Hoppity*, *Adventures of Twizzle*, *The Pingwings*, *Pogles' Wood*. Please contact Malcolm Batchelor on 01582-401394 or write 131 Chesford Road, Luton, LU2 8DP.

**WANTED:** Philips N1500 VCR. Richard Bell, 91 Kings Road, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1QQ.

**WANTED:** Does anyone have early video recordings of television programmes that they would be kind enough to swap? I have a limited collection to trade on a one for one basis if desired. I am particularly interested in the 1960s and 70s. Also, does anyone have video recordings of the 1967 TV series 'The Invaders' starring Roy Thinnes? I need most of the season one episodes. I have season 2 to swap on a one for one basis if desired.

I also have nearly every episode of 'Lost in Space' to swap. George Windsor 01252-334212; e-mail: [george\\_windsor@case.co.uk](mailto:george_windsor@case.co.uk)

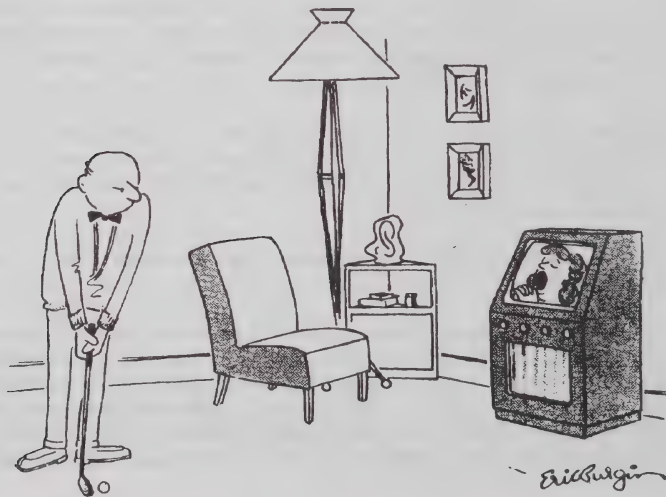
**WANTED:** IKEGAMI 79D camera parts. Especially needed, power leads, batteries. Sync, DTL and coder boards Contact Dicky Howett 01245-441811, e-mail: [Dicky.Howett@btinternet.com](mailto:Dicky.Howett@btinternet.com)

**WANTED:** Bush TV80 14" portable from 1958/59, also any of the following Bush sets considered. TV53, TV62, TV63, TV75, TV76, TV77, TV83, TV84, TV85, TV 93, TV95. Must be complete with cabinets in good condition. Contact Alan Moore on 0181-648 6657.

**WANTED:** 405-line valve 14" video monitor by Pye. Andrew Emmerson, 01604-844130. Good price paid for right models so try me!

**MESSAGE:** Watts Radio (1 West Street, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7PS, tele: 01458-272440) has been here since the 1920s and in that time has accumulated all sorts of things. It is time I found good homes for some of those things. Of interest to you may be lots of TV service manuals, some TV spares (LOPTXs, valves, scan coils, transformers, two CRTs). I don't want to make money out of these, only find good homes and gain some much needed space. We do have older kit too, to do with radio, including a carboy of sulphuric acid for radio L.T. accumulators. Call Jim Badman to make an appointment to view.

**FOR SALE:** Bush TV22, complete with genuine early '50s magnifying lens. To be offered at the auction sale to take place at The Radiophile East of England Exposition at Cowbit, near Spalding, Lincs., on 18th. October, 1998.



# HOW TO GET YOUR NAME IN 405 ALIVE

*The chief glory of every people arises from its authors.*

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Letters are always welcome and nearly all of them (unless marked Not For Publication) get published. Lengthy screeds may be edited for clarity. Electronic mail is also welcome. Address this to m idshires @ cix. co.uk

**Notes & Queries** (for publication in the magazine). Keep them coming... and your answers to them.

**Enquiries requiring an individual reply.** These are answered when time permits. You must include a stamped addressed envelope and preferable!, also your telephone: number (in case it is quicker to telephone a reply). Please be patient - thanks.

**Articles** are also most welcome. We get so many good ones that publication can take sometimes up to a year or so, but don't let that deter you. They can sometimes be held back when we group two or three together when they support a common "theme"..

**But I can't write like the big names do!** Don't worry. We can sort out your grammar and spelling. It's the facts and your ideas that count.

**How to submit material.** If at all possible, please TYPE your contributions using a dark, black ribbon. This enables them to be read straight into the word-processor by a document scanner. Magic! Contributions on 3.5" PC computer disk are also welcome and your disk will be returned. Please process your words in some popular word-processing format, ideally as an ASCII file. If in doubt please ring first on 07000-405625 - thanks. You can also fax your letters, ads and articles on 01604-821647.

**Advertising rates.** Subscribers' Classified: small-ads are free. Trade small-ads cost just £1 per line. Display ads, using your artwork: £25 per full page, £13 per half-page. We can supply artwork at extra cost if required. Charges must be pre-paid.

## BACK NUMBERS

Some recent back issues are available from the Staffordshire address; send SAE with enquiries. In a few cases the editor can lend originals for photocopying.

## FAQ FILES

FAQs are frequently asked questions, so we are keeping three files of FAQs and their answers ready- for printing out on request for readers. These files will be updated as new information comes in. The files are already quite lengthy and contain material already published, so it would not be fair on established subscribers to reprint them in the magazine. FAQfile 1 runs to 57 pages and covers general points about old TV and how to get old television sets working again. FAQfile 2 is a reprint on all the articles on test card music and ITV station ident themes; it covers 15 pages. FAQ file 1 costs £3.00 and file 2 costs £1.00 (both post paid). These prices cover just the cost of copying and postage



plus the horrendous cost of banking your cheque (68 pence!). FAQfile 3 covers suppliers of hard-to-find electronic components and service data; for this one send one first class stamp and a SAE. (Available from 71 Falcutt Way, Northampton, NN2 8PH; cheques payable to Andrew Emmerson.)

### **WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR OWN COPY OF 405 ALIVE?**

Perhaps you are reading a friend's copy – now you can't wait to receive your own copy four times a year. Send a cheque for £16 (inland and BFPO) or a Eurocheque or sterling banker's draft for £20 (all other territories) **made out to The Radiophile**, which will pay for a year's subscription (four issues). We regret credit card transactions can no longer be handled. Send money to 'Larkhill', Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP, not to Northampton.

### **ENQUIRIES REGARDING SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Please write, marking your letter for the attention of the Admin. Office, The Radiophile, 'Larkhill', Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP. We regret we can no longer handle telephone calls. Please *do not* ring the Northampton (01604) number either regarding subscriptions since all business details are now handled from Staffordshire.

## **EXCHANGE PUBLICATIONS**

You may wish to contact the following allied interest groups and publications (please send SAE with all enquiries).

**BRITISH VINTAGE WIRELESS SOCIETY:** Pat Leggatt, 28 High Park Road, Farnham, GU9 7JL.

**BRITISH AMATEUR TELEVISION CLUB:** Dave Lawton GOANO, Grenehurst, Pinewood Road, High Wycombe, Bucks., HP12 4DD.

**NARROW BANDWIDTH TV ASSOCIATION:** Doug Pitt, 1 Burnwood Drive, Wollaton, Nottingham, NG8 2DJ.

**TEST CARD CIRCLE** (TV trade test transmissions and test card music): Curtons House, School Lane, Walpole St Peter, Wisbech, PE14 7PA.

**BBC TEST CARD CLUB,** Keith Hamer, 7 Epping Close, Derby, DE3 4HR.

**SAVERS OF TELEVISION AND RADIO SHOWS (S.T.A.R.S.),** 96 Meadvale Road, Ealing, London, W5 1NR.

**ANTIQUE RADIO,** Mose' Edizioni, Via Bosco 4, 31010 Maser (TV) Italy - Tel. 00 39 423-950385; Fax 00 39 423-529049; e-mail: [mose@tv.shineline.it](mailto:mose@tv.shineline.it)

**ANTIQUE RADIO CLASSIFIED,** P.O. Box 802-A12, Carlisle, MA 01741, USA.

**IRISH VINTAGE RADIO & SOUND SOCIETY:** Henry Moore, 9 Auburn Close, Killiney, Co. Dublin.

**RADIO BYGONES** (vintage radio technology): Geoff Arnold, 9 Wetherby Close, Broadstone, Dorset, BH18 8JB.

**THE RADIOPHILE** (vintage radio): Chas. E. Miller, 'Larkhill', Newport Road, Woodseaves, Stafford, ST20 0NP.

**TELERADIO NEWS** (current radio and TV transmitter news, long-distance reception): Keith Hamer, 7 Epping Close, Derby, DE3 4HR.

**TUNE INTO YESTERDAY** (Old-Time Radio Show Collectors Association): Membership secretary: John Wolstenholme, 56 Melbourne Avenue, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield, S18 5YW.

**VINTAGE RADIO PROGRAMME COLLECTORS CIRCLE**, Roger Bickerton, 3 Park Edge, Harrogate, Yorks., HG2 8JU (01423-887452). Caters for collectors of spoken word and other radio broadcasts.

**VINTAGE LIGHT MUSIC SOCIETY**: now wound up following secretary's unfortunate death.

**ROBERT FARNON SOCIETY** (light music by all composers): David Ades, Stone Gables, Upton Lane, Seavington St. Michael, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0PZ.

**MEMORY LANE** (78rpm-era popular music): Ray Pallett, P.O. Box 1939, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3UH.

**IN TUNE INTERNATIONAL** (music of the years 1935-1960): Colin Morgan, 12 Caer Gofaint, Groes, Denbigh, Clwyd, LL15 5YT.

**LAUGH Magazine**, 52 Pembury Avenue, Worcester Park, KT4 8BT. In-depth information for people who enjoy old and new TV and radio humour.

**GROUP 9.5** (for the 9.5mm cine enthusiast), Ron Price, 4 Higher Mead, Lychpit, Basingstoke, Hants., RG24 8YL.

**PROJECTED PICTURE TRUST** (cinema history): Harold Brown, 2 Eleanor Gardens, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP21 7LT.

**VINTAGE FILM CIRCLE** (for collectors and all lovers of old films): Alex Woolliams, 11 Norton Road, Knowle, Bristol, BS4 2EZ.

## ***Memory Lane***

Memory Lane is a lively magazine specialising in music of the 1920s through to the 1950s. Although the emphasis is placed on British dance bands and vocalists of the 1930s and 1940s, Memory Lane also covers the American scene, jazz, big bands, personalities, music hall and variety artistes. Regular features on Al Bowilly - Britain's favourite vocalist.

Published quarterly and attractively printed and presented, each edition includes exclusive articles by our team of world-class writers and journalists plus Picture Pages, CD and Cassette reviews, Readers' Letters, discographical features and the advertisements that you will want to read.

A "must" for 78 RPM collectors.

A £1 coin will bring a sample copy and full details.

**Memory Lane, P O Box 1939, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 3UH,  
England.**

**The Radiophile**, the Leading Vintage  
Radio Magazine, presents the East of England



# **VINTAGE RADIO EXPOSITION AND AUCTION SALE**

**Cowbit (Near Spalding)  
Village Hall  
18th. October, 1998.**

**Sale to include Vintage Radio Receivers,  
Loudspeakers, valves, accessories and spare parts  
- also -**

**A Bush TV22 television receiver fitted with  
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**Sale to be conducted by Mr. Alan Cussons  
Exposition to include numerous stalls selling a wide  
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**Open from 10.30a.m - Auction at 1.30p.m.**

**Admission £1.50 (£1 pre-booked), free after 12noon.  
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# THE BACK PAGE

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**Editorial policy.** This magazine acts not only as a forum for research, the republication of archive material and as a monitor of current developments but also as a means for all interested in this field to keep in touch. Readers are encouraged to submit articles, photographs, notes and letters.

We print readers' addresses only when asked to. We are always happy to forward letters to other readers and contributors if postage is sent. The magazine is produced as a labour of love and all editorial work is carried out on a voluntary unpaid basis – sorry, it's only a hobby! Writers retain copyright and are encouraged to republish their articles in commercial publications.

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